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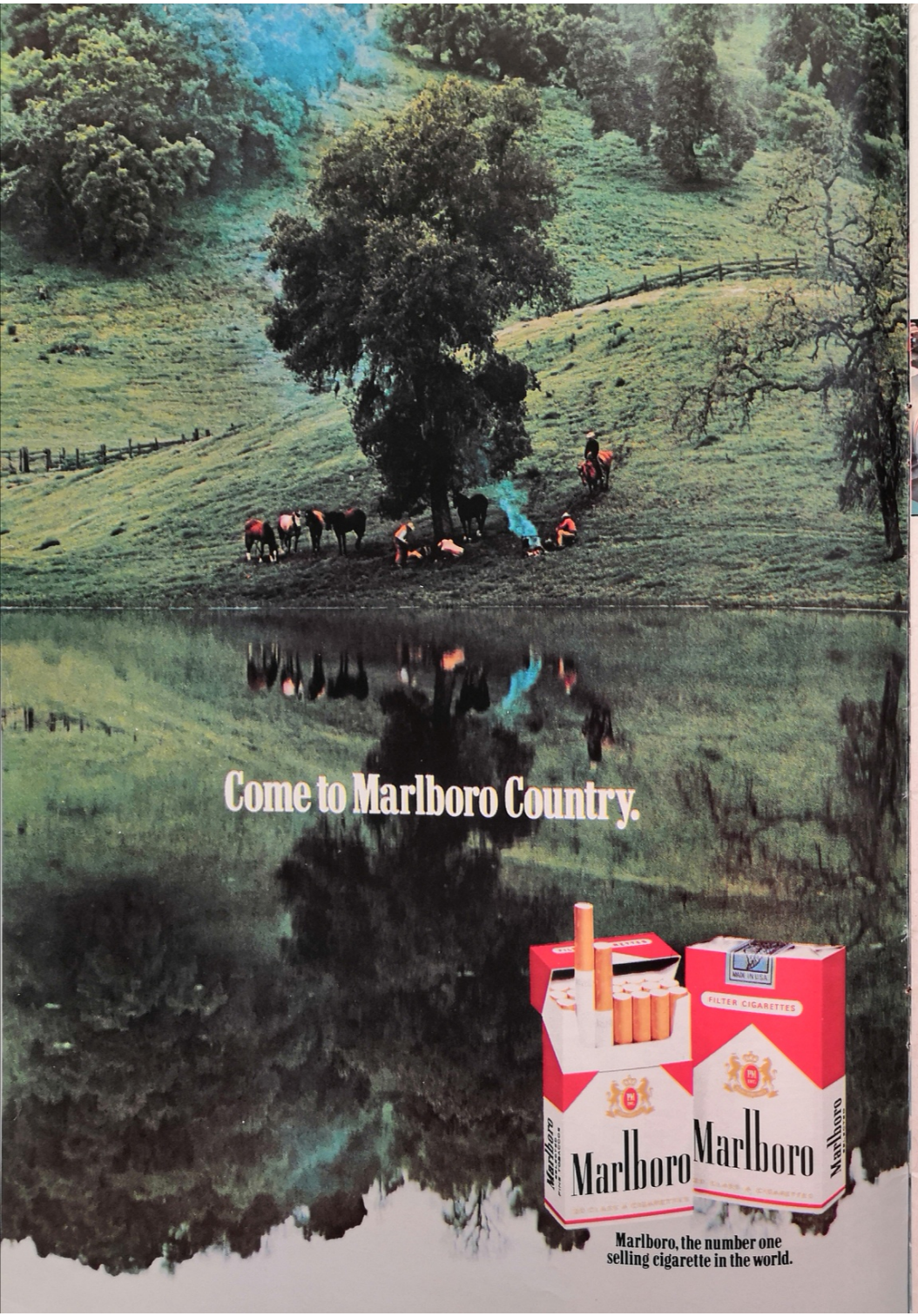

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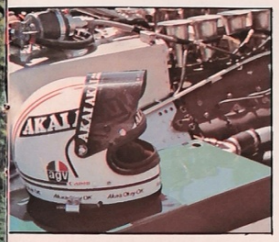

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The paddock in Long Beach

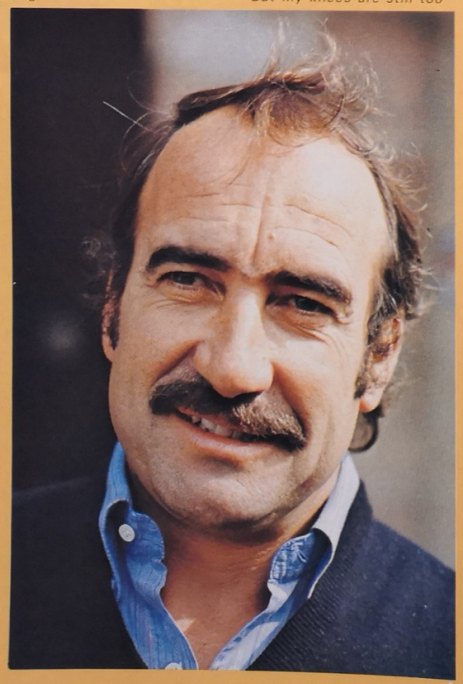
REGAZZONI : ONE YEAR ON

Just like millions of other fans, Clay Regazzoni watched the Long Beach GP on television. Then he read a book, had dinner with wife, answered some of the several phone calls which he receives daily from around the world, and then went to bed.

The date was March 15, a day like any other, except that for Clay it was exactly one year since he suffered that dreadful accident which paralysed him. Slowing for the Queen's hairpin, the brake pedal of his Ensign snapped and the car smashed into the wall at 120 mph. Clay has had no significant sensations in his body from the waist down from that day until quite recently.

For Clay did not watch the race from his home in Lugano. Instead, he is presently staying in the famous Watergate Hotel in Washington, DC. Following micro-surgery in a neighbouring hospital, he is going through the gruelling ordeal of trying to walk again.

In February, the eminent surgeon Doctor Karl Kao from Formosa and seven other specialists worked for 12 hours on Clay's damaged spinal column. During the whole of that time they were working on just a 3 mm length of the damaged tissue.



" They're all very optimistic, " says Clay, *" but I prefer to stand back and watch my own progress from afar. There are one or two little encouraging signs. I can lift one leg 40 centimetres above the bed and I can move my foot and toes. But my knees are still too weak to support my weight. I'm going to have a lot of physiotherapy. But anyway, I can tell I'm getting a little better each day. Professor Kao says that I could certainly be walking again because they can completely cure the right leg. But I'm going to need something to block the left knee if I'm to walk with both legs. I don't think I'm going to have any problem walking on crutches. "*

Professor Emanuel Mannarino, Kao's assistant, is more cautious. *" He said that I could get up and take a few steps in order to meet the Swiss president, but that it would be easier and more comfortable to use my wheel chair. I'm not under any illusions, I just hope ".*

Clay is aware that the operation which may set him back on his feet again could have many drawbacks, but then he's perfectly realistic. *" The operation was really very expensive. Professor Kao wouldn't accept any money from me, but the hospital expenses were considerable. Furthermore, there were anaesthetic charges and the cost of nursing each day. An operation like mine could easily cost over £10,000 excluding Professor Kao's fee and travelling expenses. Who can afford to gamble that money without knowing whether the operation will be successful or not ? "*

He wasn't particularly affected watching the Grand Prix on television. *" I may be laid up in bed and paralysed, but I'm not sorry for what has happened in the past. If I had the choice of doing everything again, I'd choose motor racing and I'd risk my life just as I did before. I've spent the whole summer in a wheelchair but I've seen other people a lot worse off than me. There were boys of 15 in the hospital in Basle who hadn't the slightest hope of ever moving their arms or legs ever again because they'd suffered an accident at work, or been involved in a road accident. But I've had a tremendous forty years, a marvellous, full life. And even if I have to remain as I am now, there's plenty of things with which I can occupy my time ".*

Meanwhile Clay's American lawyer, Bill Camusi, has brought a court action against the Long Beach organisers for $20,000,000 damages. A Californian law forbids a street in a town to be blocked. At the end of Shoreline Drive, the escape road was blocked by cement barrier protected by old tyres.

" I don't know what will decide this case ", says Clay, *" but I would like to win in order to create a precedent. I don't want the same thing to happen to other drivers who may be killed or paralysed because of the incompetence of organisers. If I win the case, I intend to donate all the money to those who need it ".*

But while the court case occupies some of his time, because it will be heard in Los Angeles in four months, Clay is really concentrating on the physiotherapy and work involved in strengthening his limbs. Although he doesn't actually say so, he's really determined and hopeful that he'll walk again. And what if he does ? Might he return to the track ? Would he tempt fate and don helmet and overalls again ? *" Of course I would ",* he says, a look of nostalgia crossing his face.

Pino Allievi

Toleman debut at Imola

A week before the Long Beach Grand Prix, the British Toleman team unveiled its Formula One car in Milan. Why Milan ? Because the sponsors in the team's first year of Formula 1 are Candy, the Italian washing machine company ; and Pirelli, whose radial ply tyres will be used exclusively.

Last year the team won the European Formula 2 champion ship, taking first and second places. Grand Prix racing was the next logical step up the ladder, and the team's South African designer engineer Rory Byrne has been working on a car designed around a brand new 4-cylinder turbocharged Brian Hart engine. The result is the Toleman TG181, of which six examples are to be made.

" There are three basic criteria central to the design and development of the new car, " says Byrne. *" Firstly we have designed a whole series of new systems. For example, we are using very advanced composite structures for monocoque and bodywork ; a braking system that is more advanced than those generally used in Formula 1 ; and a special wheel bearing set-up. Secondly, we have aimed to lay the car out in a way that facilitates all types of turbo engine operation and experimentation. Thirdly, suspension geometry and layout together with brand new Toleman whells are designed to suit the Pirelli P7 radial tyres with which we achieved so much success last year ".*

Developing a new Formula 1 car is an expensive business, but to undertake the development of a new car and its accompanying turbo engine (the Hart 415T) at the same time is a tremendously costly business. Accordingly, M. Peppino Fumagalli, Candy's managing director, says that *" Candy would have no objection should another sponsor wish to join us in supporting the team ".* Engine development costs alone are estimated at 1.1 million pounds'

The team manager, designers, draughtsmen, engine designer and drivers are all debuting in Grand Prix racing together. Brian Henton and Derek Warwick remain as the team's drivers, Henton is thrilled : *" its's fantastic that Toleman have offered me another chance to go Grand Prix racing. I think it's a very professional team and I think we could be in a position to win the World Championship within a few years. "*

LONDONO : A NEW NAME IN F1

An interested spectator in the pits at Long Beach was Colombian driver Ricardo Londono. Little known in Europe, where he has raced only once, Ricardo has a solid background in IMSA and Can-Am racing in North America. He will be trying to qualify a second Ensign in the Brazilian GP and in all the remaining world championship events.

ABBA BORGUDD

Also planning to make his F1 début soon is the experienced Swedish F3 driver Slim Borgudd. Starting at the San Marino GP at Imola on May 3, ATS will be running a second car for the 31 year old from Stockholm.

Though his racing has been limited to F3 and 2-litre sports-cars, Borgudd has some fine results, including an outright F3 victory at the Nürburgring. He is better known in Sweden as one of the country's top rock drummers, and has enjoyed personal sponsorship from the Abba singing group for several years. He says that an entirely different sponsor will be involved with his F1 début.

Like a mechanical albatross, the Lotus 88 hovered over Long Beach throughout the weekend of the year's first championship race. Overcoming their reluctance to shoot it down, eleven of the 14 constructors present successfully protested the machine, and Colin Chapman found himself torpedoed by a majority of his FOCA allies.

« They're all jealous, » **commented a bitterly disappointed François Mazet, director of Essex Motorsport, the Lotus sponsor.** *" However, not all of those who protested are necessarily in the clear themselves. The Brabham suspension system is illegal, and so is the six wheel car which the Williams team is about to introduce »,* **he told French television.**

"The Lotus 88 meets every letter of the rules », **insisted Chapman forcefully. The question being asked by many, however, was whether or not it also meets the spirit of the rules.** *" I have no idea what the man who wrote the rules had in mind when he was doing so »,* **said Chapman calmly.**

When former champion Jody Scheckter saw Elio de Angelis pacing around the Lotus pits, he called him over. *" Don't get all worried about it »,* **he said.** *« You're the driver, don't get mixed up in the politics, too ».* **But de Angelis had already announced that the disappointment of the car's enforced withdrawal from practising had already badly affected his driving.**

Then Scheckter made his own feelings known to the younger man. *" It's a neat idea alright, but for the good of motorsport this car should be banned. If it goes well, then everybody will have to copy it and it will be banned, just like skirts were ".*

It is nevertheless hard to admit that new ideas in the highest echelon of motorsport should be stamped on immediately. Technical progress has always been an important factor in Formula 1.

WILLIAMSPAST, PRESENT...AND FUTURE

Three hours after the Long Beach GP is over, the garage area is rapidly returning to normality as racing cars and spare parts are loaded up in readiness for their long journey south to Rio de Janeiro, the next stop on the schedule. In the technical scrutineering area, however, there are some earnest conversations going on in between representatives of the Williams, Brabham and Alfa Romeo teams.

By Mike Doodson

In the centre is Frank Williams, exercising his Italian with Alfa's *Dirretor Sportiva*, Piero Corbari. There are rumours that there is an irregularity with the rear wing of Alan Jones's winning car, and possibly also with the third place Brabham and Andretti's Alfa Romeo. It's hardly surprising when you consider that the rules under which they all rerunning are so new that the ink is still wet on the page.

Before long, the mechanics wheel away the supposedly "illegal" cars, everyone waves a cheerful "goodnight", and Frank Williams strides away to supervise the last bits of packing.

In his motorhome outside the arena, Frank is giving some instructions to his team manager Jeff Hazell. In Europe, fans would still be laying siege to the motorhome, but the friendly Californians disappeared before nightfall to party elsewhere.

Frank Williams, the only entrant ever to finish his cars in first and second positions at Long Beach, can be quiet enough here to think hard about a day which count among the most satisfying of his entire life.

"That business in scrutineering just now is a mystery, you know. When they measured the rear wing on Carlos's car, it was 79 cm high – exactly per the drawing – and one centimetre inside the limit. But Alan's was 2 mm outside the limit. That's a very small amount, of course and we had checked it several times. Significantly, it took the mechanics and officials about an hour to bring the car down from the pits. It seems to have been manhandled by an awful lot of people on the

→

way... »
It appears that SCCA Technical scrutineer John Timanus had been prepared in the circumstances to overlook so small an infraction. And when Alastair Caldwell of Brabham and Corbari of Alfa said "forget it", the last worry of Frank William's day was at last behind him.

With two victories behind the team so far this year, the Saudia-Leyland men are looking even stronger than they did a year ago. *"But this was only the first united race"*, says Frank, *"and this is a special, special circuit. I think from Brazil and Argentina onwards the English teams are going to be struggling sheerly on engine power.*

"Did you see the way the Ferraris were pulling away from everyone else on the straight ? Of all the newcomers, they impressed me the most. Their race performance, I thought, was exceptional. They have a lot of horsepower, enough to leave everyone standing. »

Previously a « hard liner » among the British constructors, Frank has now come to terms with the new FISA rules. *"That does not mean to say that I support them, but our attitude is that if we have to observe these rules, we'll try to win by observing them".*

Nevertheless, he anticipates some trouble with the interpretation of the rule book. As Williams designer Patrick Head points out, the FISA agreement forbids entrants from utilising side skirts which "continuously" touch the ground. On that basis, if the skirt ceases contact with the ground, even for just an instant, it does not constitute a "continuous" state of contact, and must therefore be within the rules. Already Patrick Head has a system of double springs ready which will bring the car closer to the ground than the "static" 6 cm, while his friendly rival Gordon Murray produced an ingenious but unreliable hydraulic chassis-lowering system at Long Beach for his Brabhams. Neither system was reliable enough to be used in the race, but they will undoubtedly find their way on to cars when they can be made to work.

"All I would say is to remind you of 11 years ago", says Frank, *" when they (the CSI) tried to ban wings. In effect, this turned out to be impossible, although it did eliminate the suspension mounted wings. What the CSI did was to introduce restrictions on their dimensions which were easy to control and simple to measure.*

"Rather than banning skirts it might have been better to say, yes, you can have skirts, but not longer than (say) four feet on each side of the car. There is the slimmest possibility that this migh be allowed. I have to say though, that the local club handled the 6 cm business very well here in Long Beach : they had two marshals per team with pieces of 6 cm diameter pipe, which they swept under the car to check its static height. We co-operated with them by always stopping our cars on the same piece of flat road surface.

"Elsewhere, they may start trying to check the 6 cm gap by using one guy at the end of the pit lane... and that's where the trouble will begin. »

It has been suggested that the arguments raging over the eligibility of the Lotus 88 are proof (if any were needed) that Formula I needs an international body to arbitrate in such disputes.

Frank disagrees, with feeling, for he (and his designer) believe firmly that it is the federation's clumsy rules which are ultimately responsible for the dispute. And it was, after all, the constructors who got together in a bid to bring peace to the sport earlier this year.

Now the constructors are virtually united in their bid to eliminate the Lotus 88, just as they were when the Brabham fan car was launched (with prior CSI approval) on the world in 1978.
"In the very difficult climate surrounding the war that's just ended, it was wrong of Colin Chapman to try to pull the wool over everyone's eyes," Frank insists. *"It seems to have put everyone on edge for the week-end : for example, one of the English mechanics actually ran a policemen over. He said he didn't want any more hassle.*
"My interpretation of the rules leads me to believe that the car is completely illegal. Significantly, nearly all the competitors agreed, then we got the Stewards on our side. I doubt that we shall ever see it again at an F1 race track. But then again, Colin is a resource ful character. »

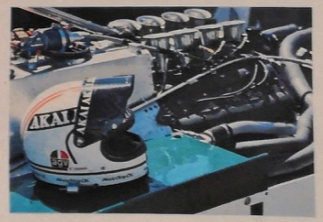
It remains to be seen whether the new Williams (the FW08 ?) presently taking shape at Didcot offers an equally radical solution. Although rumours speak of a six-wheeler (two pairs of tandem rear tyres to reduce frontal area and increase the rear "tunnel effect"),it is something that Frank doesn't discuss. It is unlikely, though, with tyres likely to be in short supply. *"People have taken Goodyear and Michelin for granted,"* Frank points out. *"I'm certainly very worried about the situation after Argentina because if I, for example, were to get a deal with Michelin while most of the others go to Avon, then one thing of which I'm sure is that it won't be the same deal as Ligier and Ferrari, for instance. »*

Williams engineers Patrick Head and Frank Dernie left the race track immediately after the race, as they usually do, in order to chase up some new bits for Argentina and no doubt, to keep an eye on the new chassis, however many wheels it's got. *"The team's marching forward strongly,"* says its boss. *"You have to keep the impetus up, make sure that the money side is under control and that sort of thing. We all give this team a lot of our time : both Patrick and I tend to be there seven days a week, even if it's only for a couple of hours on a Sunday. But we also have a large enough organisation that doesn't get overloaded like some others I know. We have a good factory which produces good stuff, more or less on time, and to a rigid specification. »*

As Frank gathered his briefcase and sweater, it seemed like a good moment to ask about Alan Jones', chances of winning a second title in 1981, which would make him the first driver to pull off that trick since Brabham in 1959 and 1960. *"Although he is good friends with Carlos, I know that he doesn't like to lose, and he was particularly disappointed about that silly mistake which he made in South Africa.*

"I think we're beginning at last to kick out some of the older misconceptions about Alan. A lot of people say that he is a hard worker, implying little or no natural talent. But he's emerging now as a naturally talented driver, I mean in terms of car control. It was Emerson (Fittipaldi) who was telling me here about watching Alan two years ago, when he was driving the FW06 non-skirt car and getting it all sideways in beautiful drifts. In a way, he's getting to be almost like Ronnie (Peterson).
« I certainly think that Alan has the maturity that it takes to win a title a second time. He is as complete a driver as any you'll see in the next few years. Provided that we can supply him with sufficiently competitive equipment, he is going to have a good chance of pulling off that elusive second consecutive title. "

The FW07, even in its revised C version, is still a winner. Will the FW08 do as well ?



Jones began 1981 where he left off in 1980. The Williams pair are perfectly satisfied with this situation.

LATER-DAY LEGALISTS

EGG ON THE GOOD BOYS' FACES

There were always some (but not many) people close to the FOCA-FISA dispute who didn't want the two battling sides ever to reunite. When at last the teams reassembled in California, it was in a spirit of relief and reconciliation, with the race and its problems preoccupying those who who had spent so much of the winter in argument. Nevertheless, there was the same feeling that children get when they start a new school term. And just as there are good boys who return to school with their homework complete, so also are there the bad ones who tend to sit at the back of the class, creating a nuisance and overlooking their homework projects. Yet when school opened at Long Beach for the 1981 term, it was the naughty boys who walked off with all the important prizes.

by Eric BHAT

The "good boys" were the ones who had worked hard during the winter as teams utterly loyal to FISA. From the very beginning they had respected the new rules as laid down by the sporting authority and were able to take advantage of the long period without races in order to get their cars sorted out in accordance with the '81 rules.

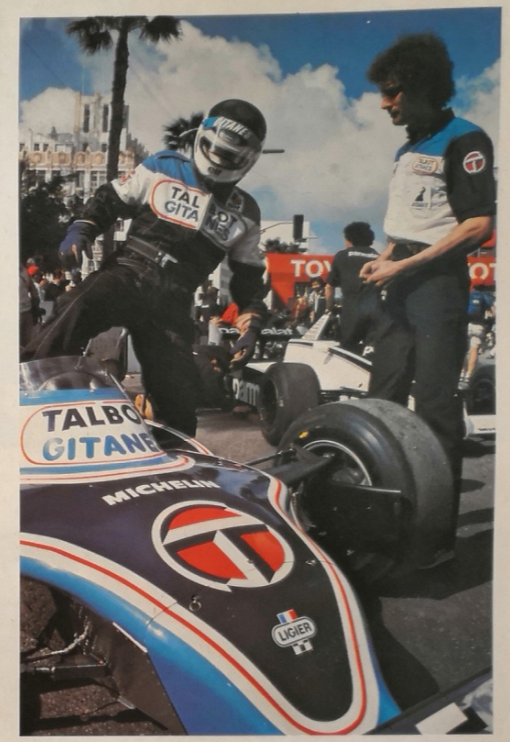
The "bad" ones of FOCA, on the other hand, refused outright to take any notice of the authorities and the project which had been set for them. They had kicked against the shafts in a vain attempt to free themselves from the shackles of the man they regarded as their tormentor. But it finally became apparent that he would not be shifted, and it was only at an extremely late date that they decided to start work on adapting their cars. Despite a few concessions, they would be required to comply with every one of the requirements laid down by the authority.

Thus, in theory at least, when practice began at Long Beach it was the "loyalist" group comprising Renault, Ferrari, Alfa Romeo, Talbot-Ligier and the tiny Osella team who should have been in the most promising positions. With all the experience they had acquired in lap after lap of the Ricard circuit during the previous weeks and months, the five goodiegoodies should by then have learned everything worth knowing about the performance of ground effect cars without skirts. One month before Long Beach, when the team owners had given the green light to their engineers to start work on skirtless chassis, the FOCA teams started what was to be some extremely hard work.

On the day before swords were to be drawn in California therefore, it would have required very little foresight to predict a victory for one of the "loyale" teams, if only because they had lots of practice under their belts, and were thus in good shape, especially when it came to understanding Michelin's radial ply tyres. *"In my opinion, the teams with the best chance of doing well here are the ones which have been able to do the most testing during the winter,"* said Brabham designer Gordon Murray with his moustache bristling in the direction of the Talbot-Ligier équipe as the French mechanics busied themselves around their smooth and powerful V12 Matra engine.

Three days later, not only were three "FOCA" drivers standing on the podium, but on the previous afternoon a fourth one had seized pole position. It goes without saying that the FOCA supporters were madly celebrating, leaving only fourth place (taken by a delighted Mario Andretti) to their rivals. The teams whose loyalty should have given them an early advantage were well and truly left with egg on their faces.

On reflection, their defeat deserves a few explanations. There is certainly nothing surprising about the good showing of the Cosworth engined cars. It must be remembered first that the Long Beach circuit — consisting as it does of hairpins and tight first and second gear corners — offers an inbuilt advantage to the light, easily-handled



cars like the Williams, Brabham and Arrows. Also, paradoxically, because the new rules favour the FOCA teams. To explain : the absence of skirts (and the consequent loss of downforce), together with the adoption of the narrow rear tyres required by FISA, has the effect of requiring an extremely delicate throttle. Setting aside the question of everyone being on identical tyres, this factor explains the return to form of a Tyrrell, for example.

March boss Robin Herd had been among the first to appreciate this, and had stated long ago that *"the new skirt regulations will not kill the Cosworth. Quite the opposite, in fact, because they will favour those who use the engine."* At Long Beach, this makes a logical argument. On the faster circuits, things will almost certainly be different on account of the greater top speed of the cars with the more powerful turbocharged or 12-cylinder engines.

Perhaps this question of being able to take advantage of the narrower rear tyres explains the comparatively poor showing of the Alfa Romeos, of which much had been expected following the lap times set by Giacomelli at Montreal and Watkins Glen at the end of last season. The Alfa V12 — a particularly torquey engine — having given Patrick Depailler a chance to shine at Long Beach last year (when he was 13th in qualifying), was not able to be exploited to the full. Nevertheless, Mario Andretti was able to deliver what must have been a satisfactory fourth place to his newly adopted team.

All things considered, too, the result was equally positive for the Scuderia Ferrari, which had two of its 1.5-litre V6 turbocars in action for the first time. *"If we can get just one of them across the line at the finish, that will constitute a victory for us,"* said Mauro Forghieri a few moments before the start. And while neither of the cars was there to take the chequered flag at the finish, the Scuderia had nevertheless scored a psychological victory. Evidently more flexible to use than the rival Renault turbocar, the new V6 gave the Italian machines a terrific top speed capability, which looks like being a decisive advantage on high speed circuits. The future is bright for Villeneuve and Pironi, both of whom left Long Beach with their faces wreathed in anticipatory smiles.

While discussing the Italians, it would be wrong to overlook the difficulties encountered by Osella, only one of whose cars was able to qualify (Gabbiani) and which was to be eliminated by one of the suspension failures which were so common last year.

For the French, there was nought but gloom. The Renault team, with some useful information gleaned during tests at the tight Nogaro circuit, was certainly expecting to do better than its Long Beach results were to show.

This was undoubtedly a black weekend for the men from Paris, who were unable at any moment during practice or the race to get among the leading positions. They were, above all, struck by the sort of bad luck which denied them their hoped-for success. *"In spite of the promising tests at Nogaro,"* said Competitions Director Gerard Larrousse, *"I did not expect it to be easy."* Throttle lag continues to be a major frustration for the Régie's men on this type of circuit. When the power comes in, it does so in a great burst, which is not at all comfortable, especially when the car is coming out of a tight hairpin bend. Prost's race went only a little way from the startline (collision with de Cesaris), while Arnoux's was anything but easy.

What can be said about the performance of the Talbot-Ligiers ? As things were to turn out, Jarier's second fastest qualifying time on Friday was only a straw in the wind. The team's two drivers were unable later to get their settings sorted out, although it is possible that the team was unable to offer the right sort of help. *"I can't wait to have Jean-Pierre Jabouille well enough to help us straighten ourselves out,"* said Laffite. *"He is a great sorter : he will get us working in the right direction."*

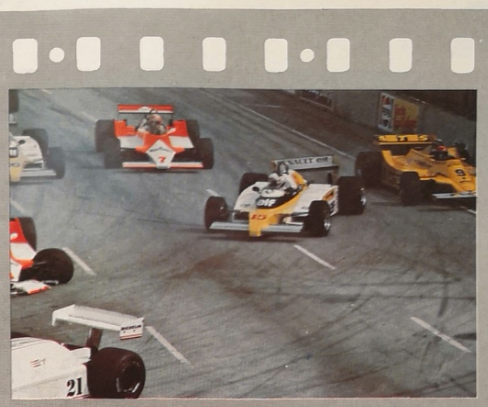
Sulking, Guy Ligier himself makes a confession : *"What worries me is that we may have a fundamental aerodynamic problem. Whatever happens, I don't think we're going to be seriously competitive until the start of the European season. We are going through a period of transition..."* □

THE FILM OF THE RACE

Riccardo Patrese started from pole position and held off the Williams through the first corner. Reutemann led the chase while Jones lay third early on. Behind the first three, the Ferrari drivers started their first race in the turbos superbly. Then Patrese began to slow and finally retired allowing Reutemann into the lead for eight laps before he slid wide and allowed his teammate to lead all the way to the chequered flag. After the Ferraris retired, it was Piquet who salvaged a distant third place.

1 →

1 - Villeneuve gets the jump from the third row and leads into the first corner in front of Patrese, Reutemann and Jones... all of whom will overtake him within seconds.



2 →

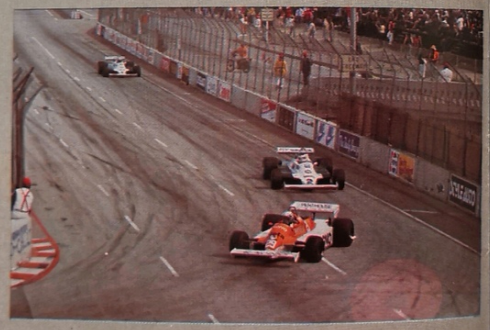
2 - And the almost traditional first corner shunt at Long Beach : Prost is hit from behind by de Cesaris. Neither driver continues.

3 →

3 - The order after one lap : Patrese in front of Reutemann and Jones. Villeneuve tries to catch them but in vain.

4 →

4 - At the back of the field, Tambay is beginning to pick up places. Here he passes Mansell on the 12th lap.



5 →

5 - The lead battle : a duel between Patrese and Reutemann with Jones watching behind. The rest are miles further back. The Arrows is soon to disappear.

6 →

5 - Behind the first three, Pironi leads the second bunch in front of Piquet, Villeneuve and Cheever. Piquet is the one to emerge as third placed driver.

7 →

7 - The two Williams drivers are in a different class but Piquet salavages some glory. Perhaps one man who deserves to be on the rostrum is the father of the faithful Cosworth, Keith Duckworth.

PRACTICE

ALAN Jones continued where he left off. The winner of the final race of the 1980 season set the fastest time in the first qualifying session for the first Grand Prix of the 1981 season. He had a comfortable 0.8s over his competitors, the closest of whom was Jean-Pierre Jarier making his debut for the new Talbot/Ligier team. Teammate Laffite was back in 14th place with accelerator trouble.

Behind Jones the forces were massed. There were ten drivers who had set times within less than a second of one another : Jarier in front of Villeneuve, Reutemann, Pironi, Patrese, Andretti, de Angelis, Mansell, Giacomelli and Piquet. There were a couple of interesting points arising from this : the fine times set by the Ferrari drivers in their new Comprex cars, despite lack of reliability, and the presence of Riccardo Patrese well up the grid. On the other hand the Renaults were not at all happy on the dusty circuit.

The next day the track was much quicker, and the times went tumbling. So too did pole position man from the previous day, bumped off the top spot by none other than Patrese. The Italian drove excellently but his Arrows certainly handled well. Jones didn't fall far down the order, retaining second place on the grid while teammate Reutemann shared the second row with Piquet. The first non-Cosworth powered cars were those of Villeneuve and Andretti who shared the third row of the grid, while Jarier dropped to tenth fastest and Laffite improved to 12 th quickest.

At the other end of the scale, the McLarens just squeezed onto the second last row of the grid, well beaten by the brand new Theodore driven by Tambay which was an excellent 17th fastest. Cogan, Daly, Guerra, Stohr and Salazar all found themselves without a race.

RACE

GILLES Villeneuve must be the master of the standing start. From fifth on the grid he rocketed through to lead into the Queen's hairpin, but running wide on the way out, he was overtaken by Patrese, Reutemann and Jones as he struggled to pull away. Behind Villeneuve came Piquet, Pironi, Cheever, Andretti, Laffite and the rest.

But two cars were left stationary back at the hairpin. Prost had been shunted up the rear by de Cesaris's McLaren, in turn thumped by Rebaque's Brabham.

At the front of the field, Riccardo Patrese seemed to have the situation well in hand. Only Reutemann appeared to be able to give chase, the Argentine having made a wise selection from the 16 Michelin tyres at his disposal. Little by little Jones was left behind but the three leaders themselves had opened up a huge gap to those following, now led by Pironi.

Villeneuve had dropped back a little with lack of turbo pressure, but didn't get further than the 18th lap anyway, for then a drives-haft broke. Four laps later de Angelis hit a wall while Arnoux tried to rid himself of vibration by changing tyres but it was in vain.

For Patrese the situation soon began to turn sour. Fuel feed problems dropped him back into Reutemann's clutches and after one unsucessful overtaking manœuvre the Argentine got by on the 25th lap. Jones overtook shortly after and the Arrows headed for the pits to try and have the problem solved, ultimately to retire there.

Further back, the mid-field bunch was enlivened both by Tambay's climb through the field and Mario Andretti's efforts. The 42-nd lap was a fairly drastic one. Laffite thumped the rear end of Cheever's car which spelt the end for the Frenchman as his nose cone stuck up almost vertically. The American continued, suffering from gearbox trouble. At the same time, Giacomelli hit Lammers's ATS and they both retired, while the fourth retirement was Rosberg's whose engine broke.

But the destiny of the race was being decided at the front. For some laps Jones had been pressuring his teammate Reutemann. The latter came up to lap Surer only to half-spin having missed his braking point. Jones needed no second invitation and he nipped past and into the lead he wasn't to lose, having been handed the race on a plate by Reutemann.

Behind the untouchable Williams, Piquet got the better of Pironi whose engine was cutting out on lefthanders. Slowly the Ferrari dropped back, first of all behind Andretti after a lively battle and then Cheever and Tambay, before pulling out with an oil leak. Among the other retirements were the two Ligiers, Jarier having had a down-on-power engine virtually from the start.

Serra finished a good seventh in front of Arnoux who finished last, one lap down. □

EXTRA, EXTRA

THE LOTUS AFFAIR

BY time the Essex-Lotus 88 was being unloaded from a small truck inside the Long Beach Arena where the racing cars are garaged, it was already early in the morning of Thursday March 12. All but a few of the cars entered for the GP had already been there for at least a day, and now their mechanics were tucked up in bed. As the Lotus mechanics staggered off to the Travelodge Motel for a few blessed hours of rest, they were not to know that between Tuesday morning, when they had left their homes in Norfolk, and the morning of the Long Beach GP, five and a half days later, several of them would have spent less than ten hours in bed

As far as the Lotus boys were concerned, the Lotus 88 was already a controversial car. Most of them had spent several weeks helping to build it, and many of them had been to its first test at the Paul Ricard circuit in France. The sheer work involved was draining them, putting lines on their faces that are likely still to be there at the end of 1981. No sooner had they arrived by plane in Los Angeles than they had embarked on the drive north to Laguna Seca, eight solid hours' away, where Elio de Angelis had tested the car (and lightly damaged it in a minor accident). After two and a half full days without sleep, even the phlegmatic Bob Dance, Lotus' unflappable chief mechanic, said that the state of the crew had become *"a bit sordid"*. Team manager Peter Collins, following the truck in a hire car, arrived back in Long Beach with a suspicious looking scar on its fender. "A puncture", he said, although it would have been no disgrace to have admitted that he fell asleep at the wheel and walloped a piece of guard rail.

Later on Thursday, the public inquisition began into the type 88, as an SCCA-appointed body of technical scrutineers began to examine the car to determine its eligibility. They decided it was " legal ", but a concerned meeting of all the constructors was soon taking place. Feelings evidently ran high (*" Guy Ligier almost broke the table, he was hitting it so hard "*, said Lotus consultant aerodynamicist Peter Wright), and when the meeting broke up, no fewer than eleven entrants — excluding only Tyrrell, Fittipaldi, ATS and Theodore — had decided to protest the car. Somewhat nervously, Colin Chapman grinned : *" I think they're having a little difficulty deciding which part of the regulations we're supposed to be breaking "*.

The process which was to lead to the exclusion of this most innovative of racing cars had already begun. For Chapman, though, only the initial reaction of the technical scrutineers was to be an encouragement. For by 11.07 on Saturday morning, not only were the majority of his fellow constructors protesting the new projectile, but also the Stewards of the Meeting had decided that it could not run. Below is a brief time scale of the events that led to that decision.

9.00 Fri. Stewards of the Meeting convene to hear the 11 protests.....

10.00 As Elio de Angelis prepares to do what will be the first of only three laps in the first session, the Stewards break to supervise practising.....

11.50 : First practice ends : de Angelis has done only three laps with the 88, the fastest of them nine seconds slower than his best with the type 81.

18.00 : Stewards of the Meeting, through their Chairman John Bornholdt, announce their decision to uphold the teams' protest. *"We are dealing with a very innovative car"*, says Bornholdt. *"If the FISA rules were clear, it wouldn't have taken so much time to (have) come to a decision"*. His statement adds that the basis of the protest concerned *"the legality of coachwork and the attachment of coachwork"*.

18.25 : Chapman appeals against the Stewards' decision to uphold the protest, lodges the 250 dollars appeal fee and is assured that the appeal will be passed to the ACCUS. Pending the hearing of the appeal, both Chapman and Bornholdt are convinced that the 88 can practise and race subject to the decision of any higher court.

10.58 : As the Lotus mechanics (following another night without sleep) prepare to strap de Angelis into the type 88, LBGP President Chris Pook delivers an unsigned statement (evidently from the Stewards) reversing their decision of the day before. When Chapman sends the car on to the track, it is immediately black-flagged. *"I unfortunately made an error"*, Bornholdt later confesses, *"when stating that the car, under appeal, could practise, qualify and compete. The FISA regulations are very specific about this. The car is not eligible for competition until the appeal has been heard"*.

11.50 : Chapman enters a Press Conference arranged the previous afternoon, before the car's exclusion. He is clearly upset, both with the decision and the way it was presented. *"The reasons why our car was found ineligible have not been given to us"*, he says, also complaining that the Technical Scrutineers who had passed it originally were not even called. *"Neither of these is required according to FISA rules"*, says Bornholdt. Chapman announces decision to bring the procedural irregularities to the attention of the Automobile Clubs of the US (ACCUS), Great British (RAC) and Monaco (ACM).

In the garage, Brabham designer Gordon Murray — whose Brabham "fan car" was banned from competition in 1978 under not entirely dissimilar circumstances — states several grounds on which he believes the type 88 to be illegal. It is difficult to overlook the fact that one of the prime movers in getting the fan car outlawed was... Colin Chapman.

In the Lotus camp, Bob Dance tries to look cheerful through a face full of gray stubble.

"It was a helluva long way to come just to get our pride and joy black-flagged", he admits.

Mike Doodson

TAMBAY : ''BEGINNING AGAIN...''

BACK in its pit at the end of the race, Patrick Tambay's Theodore carries all the marks of a long, hard race. Its immaculate white paintwork is now stained with tyre dust and burned oil. As he returns through the pit lane, Patrick carefully encourages the crowd to stand aside by blipping the throttle.

One last burst from the engine and he switches it off, coasting the final few yards to where his team is waiting. It's a moment of joy for them all to savour a while longer. And suddenly Patrick's eyes mist over, for there have been some emotional moments to make this weekend one to remember.

Submitting to the excited greetings which await him, he can't resist asking the question that's been hovering at the back of his own mind for more than a year. *''Well''*, he says : *''do you think I've still got it or not ? ''*

As come-backs go, this has been a particularly convincing one. Sixth place means a championship point first time out for Hong Kong entrant Teddy Yip, who's performing a sort of Chinese victory jig in the pit lane. And, unbelievably, his fastest lap is the fourth fastest overall of the race, all this with a car that's still in the process of being sorted out. It's almost too much to believe.

The car's first few laps of testing at Willow Springs a few days beforehand had certainly not been encouraging. The car, which has been put together in a hurry at its Lichfield workshop in the English Midlands, was full of bugs which made it impossible to gauge its true potential.

At last those few days in the California sunshine enabled the members of the team to get acquainted. Patrick knew Tony Southgate, the team's designer, only by his reputation. But it was enough to persuade him to sign. And he knew nothing about team manager Dave "Beaky" Sims, who had come to Theodore — together with three mechanics — from the dissolved BS Fabrications organisation.

'' I was determined to get back into Formula 1, '' says Patrick, *''but not just with any old team. You can't imagine the effect which it can have on a driver when he has to spend a year on the sidelines. A lot of people were convinced that I was completely washed up after my second year with McLaren. What they didn't know was that I was driving even better than I had been doing in the first year ! Unfortunately, I was the only one who knew... ''*

Southgate was able to confirm this at Willow Springs. *'' He is a good test driver ''*, he said, *'' much better than we expected ''*. Tambay, for his part, found an immediate rapport with his new associate. *'' This man Southgate is remarkable, ''* he says : *''we established fantastic lines of communication right from the start. I'm sure that the guys on the team could sense it immediately, because they were obviously doing their very best. It's all so encouraging ''*.

Both during the Willow Springs test and throughout practice at Long Beach, there were to be some major problems with the car. The most serious was the bodywork, which ripped away from the undersides *('' at least it proves we've got downforce ''*, said Southgate), and there was also a very awkward gearchange, caused by the incorrect placing of a bushing in the monocoque. Nevertheless, the car appeared consistently in the first 14 or 18 places, eventually qualifying 17 th.

And on Saturday evening, when the fuel tank was emptied for a fuel check, it was discovered that it was almost half full. Tambay had therefore qualified with a car that was a good 30 kilos overweight ! At his end of the grid, fractions of a second were surprisingly important, indeed a saving of three or four tenths would have put him up with the Talbots and a Ferrari...

On Sunday morning, with his face showing worry lines which he would have preferred to camouflage, Tambay needed no reminding of the importance of the occasion. *'' I'm rusty, and I know it ''*, he said. *'' A year and a half is a long time to be away from a Formula 1 car. I'm going to take it easy at the start, settle down into a rhythm, and make sure that my tyres don't go off ''*.

He was as good as his word. Indeed, he was forced to go easy, for a major oil leak during the morning warm-up had left him with no time in which to bed-in the brake pads he was using in the race.

But everything went well. He managed a terrific start. *''The day before, when I did a couple of practice starts, I noticed that the fresh tyres, before they flatten out, are short of traction. So I let the clutch out with not quite so many revs on the clock, and the wheels hardly spun at all. I stayed on the outside under braking for the Queen's hairpin, hoping not to repeat my stunt in 1979 when flying over the top of somebody''*.

By quarter distance, Tambay was into his stride. He was lying 12th, with Jarier just ahead of him and a likely subject for overtaking. On lap 25, the two of them were side by side under braking for the hairpin. Tambay slipped through so confidently on the inside that Jean-Pierre, fearing a possible collision, had no alternative but to let him through. And five laps later it was the turn of Rosberg, no less, to move over.

In spite of a moment when the gearshift baulked and he lost three seconds in a straight-on incident down an escape road, Patrick kept his position.

'' We had set the wings virtually flat, so the car was extremely quick on the straights. The ground effect which the car was getting at high speed was very impressive indeed. It helped me to get past Giacomelli when I went round the outside of him in the big loop. Fantastic ! ''

By the time half distance had come up on the Theodore pit board, Laffite had managed to shunt his car against the back of Cheever's Tyrrell... and Patrick was seventh, with his sights set on the young American. Alas, he missed a gear again and lost some time in another straight-on moment which also caused some damage to the front wing. *'' Suddenly the car started to understeer badly .''*

Tambay's last scrap of the race was to be with Pironi, whose Ferrari was in serious fuel feed trouble. On lap 61 he was able to slice past the sick turbo-car. And now he was in the points.

In the Theodore pit, Southgate looked well pleased. *'' Patrick had a fantastic race, ''* he beamed. *'' He went past several drivers, including some in very quick cars. Did you see the way he went past the Alfa ? Don't forget that we've still got a few bugs to get out of the car. There's lots to do. I think it all looks very promising .''*

Tambay was equally happy about the future. *'' I made a couple of mistakes which could have cost me a lot of time, but I was lucky ! Now we have to start work properly .''*

There is no formal contract between Yip and Tambay. *'' As long as they're happy with me, I hope to stay, ''* says Patrick, *'' and vice versa. As long as we can have the same tyres as everyone else, I think that this is a worthwhile effort .''*

Tyres, yes ! For with skirts now out of the way, it is rubberwear which is going to be important again. And Patrick was happy to mention the sporting attitude of the Michelin people who had arranged for every team at Long Beach to race on identical tyres.

'' Last year it would have been impossible for a small team to have done what we did today. I'm almost tempted to hope that the tyre situation stays the same way for the rest of the year ''

This would appear to be impossible, and as far as Theodore and Tambay are concerned, their showing in the next two races is going to have a very special importance. *'' I genuinely believe in myself, ''* he says, *'' to just the same extent that I did when I started with the Ensign in 1977. This time, though, I have got experience on my side... ''*

Mario Luini

Long Beach statistics

USA WEST GRAND PRIX

Date : March 15, 1981
Circuit length : 2,020 miles
Race distance : 80 laps, 162,61 miles
Conditions : Sunny
Attendance : approx 80,000 spectators

THE RECORD

(last five races)

1976 : Regazzoni (Ferrari 312 T/76)
1977 : Andretti (Lotus 78)
1978 : Reutemann (Ferrari 312 T3)
1979 : Villeneuve (Ferrari 312 T4)
1980 : Piquet (Brabham BT49)

STARTING GRID

PATRESE	Arrows A3/B	**JONES**	Williams FW 07/B
	1'19"399		1'19"408
REUTEMANN	Williams FW 07/B	**PIQUET**	Brabham BT 49/B
	1'20"149		1'20"289
VILLENEUVE	Ferrari 126 C	**ANDRETTI**	Alfa Romeo 179
	1'20"462		1'20"476
MANSELL	Lotus 81	**CHEEVER**	Tyrrell 010
	1'20"573		1'20"643
GIACOMELLI	Alfa Romeo 179	**JARIER**	Talbot Ligier JS 17
	1'20"664		1'20"787
PIRONI	Ferrari 126 C	**LAFFITE**	Talbot Ligier JS 17
	1'20"909		1'20"925
DE ANGELIS	Lotus 81	**PROST**	Renault RE 20 B
	1'20"928		1'20"980
REBAQUE	Brabham BT 49/B	**ROSBERG**	Fittipaldi F8
	1'21"000		1'21"001
TAMBAY	Theodore TY 01	**SERRA**	Fittipaldi F8
	1'21"298		1'21"409
SURER	Ensign N 181	**ARNOUX**	Renault RE 20 B
	1'21"522		1'21"540
LAMMERS	ATS D4	**DE CESARIS**	Mc Laren M 29C
	1'21"758		1'22"028
WATSON	McLaren M 29C	**GABBIANI**	Osella FA 1B
	1'22"183		1'22"213

Non qualified :

COGAN (Tyrrell 010) 1'22"284
SALAZAR (March 811) 1'22"356
GUERRA (Osella FA1/B) 1'22"673
STOHR (Arrows A3/B) 1'23"504
DALY (March 811) 1'24"383

TIMES IN UNOFFICIAL PRACTICE

	Friday morning	Saturday morning	
PATRESE	1'24"043	1'21"166	1'21"942
JONES	1'21"260	1'20"585	1'21"215
REUTEMANN	1'22"901	1'20"885	1'21"320
PIQUET	1'22"045	1'21"395	1'22"502
VILLENEUVE	1'23"224	1'22"619	1'23"710
ANDRETTI	1'23"411	1'21"233	1'21"993
MANSELL	1'22"508	1'21"616	1'24"732
CHEEVER	1'23"919	1'21"449	1'22"645
GIACOMELLI	1'23"970	1'21"706	1'22"329
JARIER	1'22"967	1'22"235	1'22"911
PIRONI	1'22"996	1'23"146	1'23"308
LAFFITE	1'23"088	1'22"190	1'22"876
DE ANGELIS	1'22"583	1'22"800	1'23"106
PROST	1'23"231	1'22"254	1'25"617
REBAQUE	1'22"612	1'21"569	1'23"240
ROSBERG	1'23"734	1'22"615	1'22"699
TAMBAY	1'25"714	1'22"481	1'26"886
SERRA	1'25"430	1'23"536	1'24"725
SURER	1'23"479	1'22"751	1'24"147
ARNOUX	1'24"414	1'22"999	1'23"713
LAMMERS	1'24"535	1'23"161	1'22"916
DE CESARIS	1'24"755	1'22"614	1'22"796
WATSON	1'30"467	1'23"380	1'23"959
GABBIANI	1'27"997	1'23"229	1'25"228
COGAN	1'25"360	1'23"313	1'25"938
SALAZAR	1'37"469	—	—
GUERRA	1'24"493	1'23"428	—
STOHR	1'25"536	1'23"093	—
DALY	1'28"791	—	—

OFFICIEL PRACTICE TIMES

	1st session	2cnd session
PATRESE	1'21"983	1'19"399
JONES	1'20"911	1'19"408
REUTEMANN	1'21"739	1'20"149
PIQUET	1'22"675	1'20"289
VILLENEUVE	1'21"723	1'20"462
ANDRETTI	1'22"020	1'20"476
MANSELL	1'22"461	1'20"573
CHEEVER	1'22"992	1'20"643
GIACOMELLI	1'22"592	1'20"664
JARIER	1'21"722	1'20"787
PIRONI	1'21"828	1'20"909
LAFFITE	1'23"140	1'20"925
DE ANGELIS	1'22"380	1'20"928
PROST	1'23"049	1'20"980
REBAQUE	1'23"298	1'21"000
ROSBERG	1'23"356	1'21"001
TAMBAY	1'23"373	1'21"298
SERRA	1'26"730	1'21"409
SURER	1'28"045	1'21"522
ARNOUX	1'23"363	1'21"540
LAMMERS	1'23"802	1'21"758
DE CESARIS	1'23"728	1'22"028
WATSON	1'26"419	1'22"183
GABBIANI	1'24"032	1'22"213
COGAN	1'25"164	1'22"284
SALAZAR	1'25"017	1'22"356
GUERRA	1'25"190	1'22"673
STOHR	1'23"504	—
DALY	1'26"074	1'24"383

THEIR FASTEST RACE LAPS

	Time	Lap n°
Jones	1'20"90	31
Reutemann	1'20"91	31
Piquet	1'21"83	69
Andretti	1'21"79	66
Cheever	1'22"23	36
Tambay	1'21"75	49
Serra	1'23"09	19
Arnoux	1'22"54	34
Surer	1'22"77	50
Pironi	1'22"23	26
Jarier	1'22"90	41
Rebaque	1'22"68	49
Laffite	1'22"08	33
Giacomelli	1'22"41	37
Rosberg	1'22"88	25
Lammers	1'22"33	29
Patrese	1'21"42	14
Gabbiani	1'25"19	14
Mansell	1'22"75	19
Villeneuve	1'22"54	15
Watson	1'24"55	15
De Angelis	1'23"32	8

PROVISIONAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSIFICATION

1. Jones 9 pts - **2.** Reutemann 6 pts - **3.** Piquet 4 pts - **4.** Andretti 3 pts - **5.** Cheever 2 pts - **6.** Tambay 1 pt.

CONSTRUCTORS CUP

1. Williams 15 pts - **2.** Brabham 4 pts - **3.** Alfa Romeo 3 pts - **4.** Tyrrell 2 pts - **5.** Theodore 1 pt.

RESULTS

1. JONES	Williams FW 07/B	80 laps in 1h50'41"33 (87,6 mph)
2. REUTEMANN	Williams FW 07/B	9"19 behind
3. PIQUET	Brabham BT 49/B	34"92 behind
4. ANDRETTI	Alfa Romeo 179	49"31 behind
5. CHEEVER	Tyrrell 010	1'06"70 behind
6. TAMBAY	Theodore TY01	one lap behind
7. SERRA	Fittipaldi F8	two laps behind
8. ARNOUX	Renault RE 20/B	three laps behind

Fastest lap : Jones, 1'20"901, 89,887 mph.
Record : Piquet (Brabham BT49) 1979 : 1'19"83.

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Postcard from Long Beach

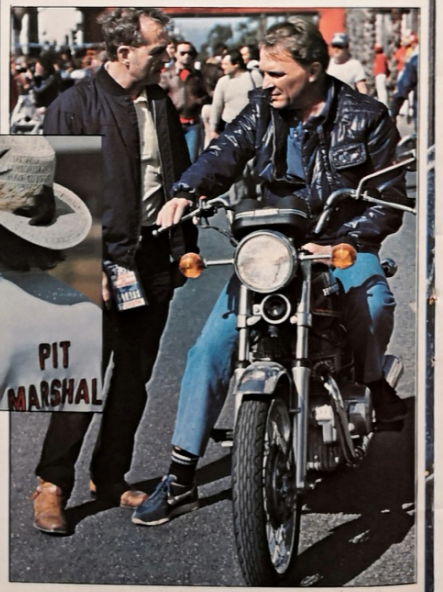
There seemed to be a "Miss Long Beach" everywhere you looked.

A fifteen lap race for pushbikes could at least be lap charted without having to wear ear plugs.

The familiar faces of former track rivals Dan Gurney and Phil Hill

Pine Avenue, Convention Center : it can't be very far away from the street circuit.

Long Beach's most famous landmark : the Queen Mary stands graciously at her permanent California moorings.

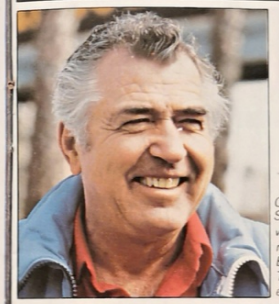


Where else would you see a character like this but in the USA ?

These guys are really crazy : to get the best out of their sidecars the passengers don't hesitate to stick their heads out, literally. And seat belts are definitely out of order...

The Formula Atlantic race was won by Geoff (son of Sir Jack) Brabham from Jacques (brother of Gilles) Villeneuve and Danny Sullivan.

Rita Cheever loves to read, so naturally she makes sure she has the right sort of publication.



Carroll Shelby was back in racing at Long Beach in the Toyota Pro-Am event.

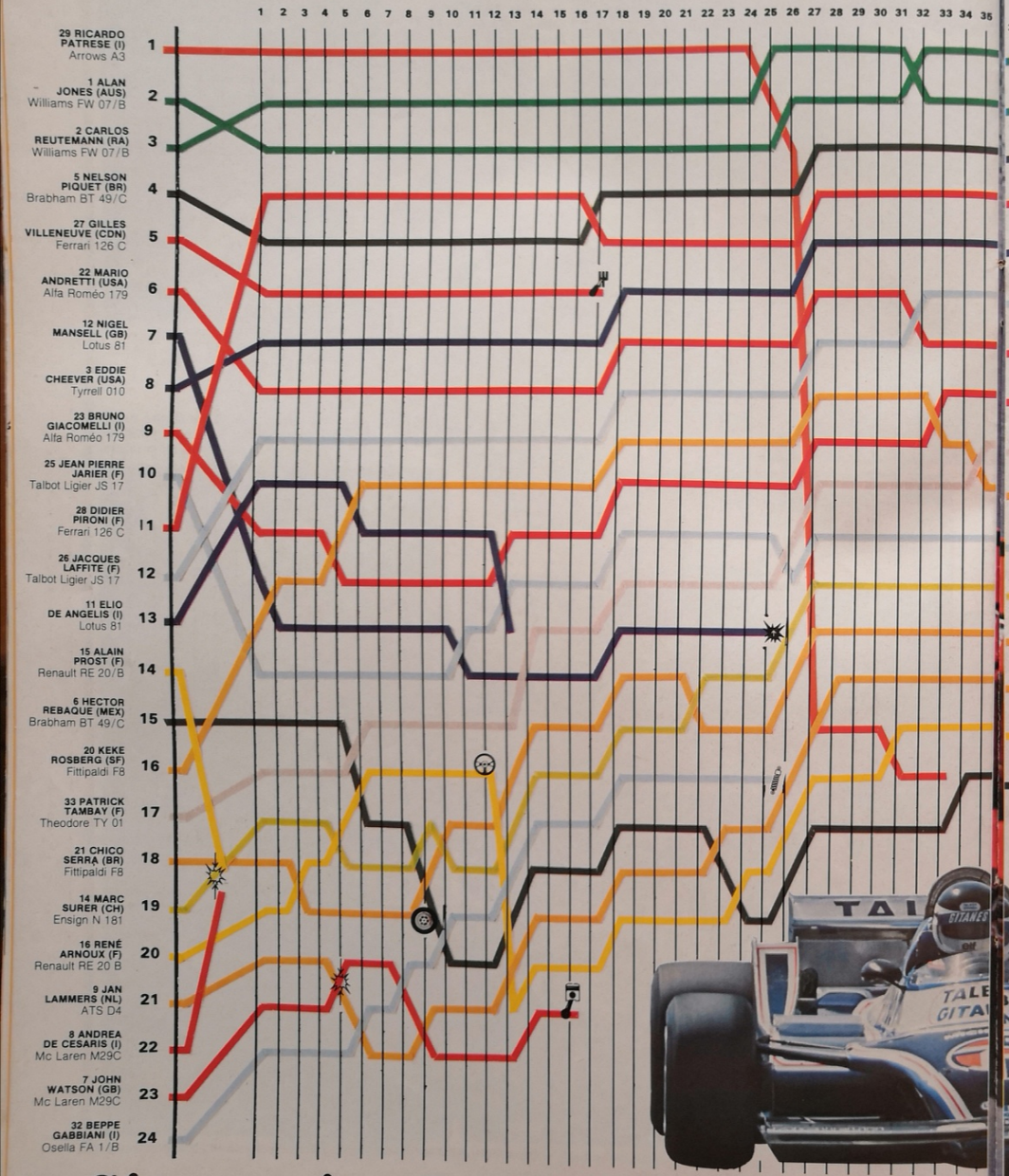
Her name is Jenilee Harrison... and she is the star of the American TV series « Three's Company »

One-time Penthouse "Pet of the Year" Dominique Maure helps Riccardo Patrese to enjoy his pole position success.

Reports suggest that Colin Chapman had plans to build an F1 car with solid kart-style suspension.

The two master-minds of the US Grand Prix (West) : Bernie Ecclestone and Chris Pook. And where was the President of FISA ?

Lap by lap - Giro per giro - Runde um Runde - Tour par tour - Vuelta a vuelta - Ronde na ronde

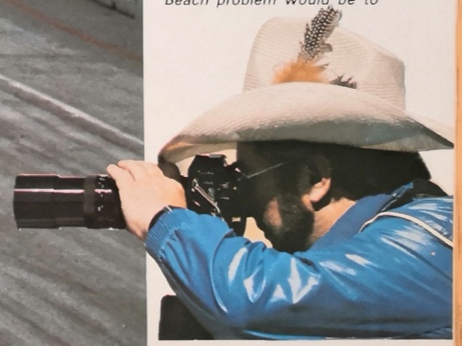


PIT STOPS AND RETIREMENTS

Prost : accident with De Cesaris at first corner.
De Cesaris : accident with Prost at first corner.
Lammers : stopped fifth lap to take off front wing damaged by Serra's car. Retired 42cnd lap, accident with Giacomelli.
Watson : stopped eighth lap, plug change, retired 16th lap, power loss.
Rebaque : stopped ninth lap, tyre change, retired 49th lap, accident.
Arnoux : stopped 12th lap, vibration.
De Angelis : accident, 14th lap.
Villeneuve : retired 18th lap, broken halfshaft.
Mansell : accident 25th lap.
Patrese : stopped 26th and 30th laps with fuel pressure trouble, retired 33rd lap for same reason.
Gabbiani : retired 26th lap, broken front suspension.
Giacomelli : accident with Lammers, 42cnd lap.
Laffite : retired 42cnd lap after running into the back of Cheever.
Rosberg : retired 42cnd lap, engine.
Jarier : retired 65th lap, engine.
Pironi : retired 67th lap, oil leak.
Surer : retired 70th lap, electrics.

FUNNEL

In spite of the Long Beach organisers' 1979 attempt to cut down first lap accidents by relocating the start line on the main straight, the 180 degree, Queen's hairpin has become the scene of the circuit's unfortunate – but inevitable – first lap shunts. The problem is exaggerated because there is only one ideal line around the tight hairpin, which means in effect that the approach to it becomes a funnel. This year, after a fantastic start, it was Villeneuve who had a brush with disaster by trying to outbrake everyone... and immediately slithering wide. Further back, the traditional argy-bargy resulted in two first-lap victims : Alain Prost, already sandwiched between two other cars, was forced to brake hard, and immediately collected the McLaren of Andrea de Cesaris, who also managed to touch Rebaque's Brabham. The unfortunate Mexican found himself doing an involuntary wheelie. General opinion is that the only solution to this annual Long Beach problem would be to space out the cars even more on the grid. The spectacle might suffer, but it would be much safer. (photos Bernard Asset - A+P.)



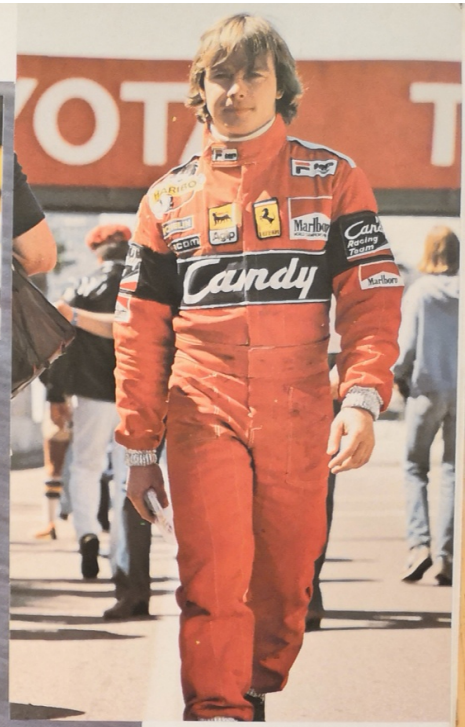
WELL DONE PATRICK

Life has been good to Patrick Tambay. His arrival in Grand Prix racing, with Teddy Yip's Ensign in 1977, seemed a logical and natural step. Within half a season he had been invited to join a top-rank team. But that was to be the end of the idyll : from then onwards, there were only setbacks . Two fruitless seasons with the Marlboro McLaren team appeared to be sending him on the road to nowhere. But he was determined not to allow himself to be forgotten. After a 1980 spent racing in the Can-Am, he took a big gamble on an entirely new team with an untried car, and with a designer who, like himself, had some points to prove. If the project didn't work, of course, Tambay faced the risk of disappearing forever, because although it is possible for a driver to make one come-back, there is no record of any one ever having done it a second time. With sixth place at Long Beach, there is no doubt now that the dare was worthwhile... and life is looking good once more for Patrick Tambay. (Photos Bernard Asset-A + P.)

CHEEVER'S FIRST POINTS

Eddie Cheever learned some useful lessons last year with Osella, where he demonstrated some brilliant qualities. Ken Tyrrell was so impressed that he signed up the young American for 1981. « He did some remarkable things last year with was not a competitive car at all », explains Ken, who has since formed a close association with his new driver during lengthy private test sessions. Nor does he hide the enthusiasm which he feels for Eddie : « not since Jackie Stewart have I had a driver who was able to relate to my engineers as well as this young American. » The Cheever qualities include confidence, a tough attitude on the track, and an outstandingly technical approach to the car. The first fruits of the Tyrrell Cheever collaboration at Long Beach were the two points which they scored for fifth place. Assuming that « uncle » Ken can provide him with a top-level car, this is certainly someone to keep an eye on. (Photos Bernard Asset Asset A + P).

'DIDI' OK



By the time he arrived in Long Beach, new Ferrari signing Didier Pironi had already completed several hundred miles of testing with the Scuderia's latest turbocar. There are many obstacles to be jumped before any driver can truly be said to be part of the Scuderia which is symbolised by the prancing horse, but in the process of wringing out the all-new 1.5-litre V6 engined Ferrari 126 C there is no doubt that Pironi has become a fully integrated member of the team. He is thrilled with the results of the engine builders in particular for the silent V6 – whether in turbocharged or Comprex version – is already more than competitive. Pironi himself came within 30 laps of scoring his first points for the Scuderia : "in three months time we shall be in a position to win races", insists the delighted Frenchman. And Commendatore Ferrari was no doubt delighted with the performance of his new protégé, whose Long Beach exploits were reported live on Italian radio. (Photos Bernard Asset-A + P.)

MARIO ANDRETTI

It's a tall order to ask a 41-year-old to fight it out with other drivers young enough to be his sons, but that's just what Mario Andretti is doing this season.
He's making a fresh start, despite his experience and age, with the Alfa Romeo team. But why dwell on his age and experience ? At Long Beach, Mario demonstrated that he's still a young fighter at heart, judging from the tremendous battle he had with Didier Pironi. Mario believes strongly in the Alfa Romeo team, and he's very valuable to them as a fast yet sensitive driver. And after a number of seasons with the English Lotus team, Mario almost returns home by joining an Italian team. He's one of those men who is accomplished, yet as ambitious as ever.
There's still a lot of racing left in Mario yet.

by Giorgio PIOLA

Mario Andretti has appeared to be particularly relaxed this year. Our chat at Long Beach was along the same lines, although we didn't ask him too much about Alfa Romeo as one of their men was keeping a close watch on what he might say, and a wrong comment from Mario might have jeopardised his position. Even so, we asked him why he'd waited until October before deciding to join the Alfa Romeo team.
Well, there were a lot of question marks about the coming season. These days you have to have the right car, THE car in order to win, and you can't tell which car that's going to be, six months in advance. In the end I had to make up my mind. I had a number of choices, and I hope I made the right choice. But I had to sign with some one. I couldn't wait until January because theoretically the season should have started then.

This year's Grand Prix season has been a long time in getting started, so the Long Beach race was really the first race of the year, and certainly the first without skirts. Is there really a big difference driving a car without skirts ?
Yes, there's certainly a difference. The cars don't feel as though they're on rails any longer. They don't follow the line around a corner as precisely as before. They feel rather more nervous and react to the slightest movement. But we'll just have to wait because I don't think it will be long before we eliminate these problems and then the cars will be just as stable without skirts as they were with.

How did the car handle in the long left-hander which is really the only fast corner at Long Beach ? Did you feel the absence of skirts more in that corner than in the slower turns ?
The car handled really well in the fast corner. There was no understeer and generally it was well-balanced. But we'll have to see, it's really a little early to judge.

While we're on the subject of new developments, did you know that Colin Chapman was building the Lotus 88, because even if you did, you still moved to Alfa Romeo. Was this a cause or effect ?

My Lotus days are over. I'd prefer to forget that period and concentrate on the future. My future is with Alfa Romeo. We've got to work hard to reach the highest possible standard and fight it out with the best of them. But having said that, I must emphasise that Lotus's programme had no influence on my subsequent decision.

So Colin Chapman's increasingly adventurous developments didn't result in you losing confidence in him ?
Mmmh, I'd prefer not to talk about it. As I said, that's behind me, now...

But surely you have some ideas about the Lotus 88 ? What are you views on Chapman's philosophy ?
Let me be frank. The facts are quite clear. Chapman himself knows it and so do those who understand the pro-

blem : the Lotus 88 is illegal, absolutely illegal. The rules may be unclear and may be interpreted wrongly because they lack clarity, but that's the fault of the people who wrote them. From the moment that they're written and that they're accepted, then everyone has to adhere to them. The rule that outlaws the Lotus dates back to 1969. It's nothing new. If people want to go backwards, why not ? I've got to give it to Chapman : his system really utilises the aerodynamics to their best avantage. But the system doesn't conform to the regulations. Chapman has put himself at risk because he hasn't come up with an original idea. But now the car's legality is being called in to question, he's making himself out to be a martyr. Either way, he's going to win and that will be fine with him.

Do you think a driver is concerned about driving a car when it isn't legal ? Would you drive under those conditions ?

Personally, I've never really cared. The most important thing as far as I'm concerned is to be in front. I don't really want to know whether the Lotus with which I won the World Championship in 1978 was legal or not. But it used skirts which were slowly adopted by all the other constructors. A driver and his team are always trying to get themselves in front of the rest, and they try every method to do so. I might drive a car with three, six or 12 wheels. I don't care so long as I'm in front. I'll do anything to be a winner. I drive what I'm given to drive, although sometimes that's a disadvantage.

Does the same apply to safety ? There are some cars that are more dangerous than others.

Listen, let's imagine that Alfa Romeo offered me a five litre engine for the next race. Well, I'd take it, and willingly.

Looking at the practice times for Long Beach it seems that the supposedly tractable and powerful engines haven't dominated. Instead the good old Cosworth is at the front as usual, even though the FOCA constructors said that banning their skirts would slow down Cosworth-powered cars. The Williams in particular are very quick. Were you expecting that ?

Well, wait a moment, the season hasn't finished yet. But the Williams team is really efficient, and they do things very well. I think Patrick Head is currently in front of the rest when it comes to ground effect. I'm not really surprised to find them on top again, taking everything into account. When you consider the quality of their work and the spirit that reigns within the team, then you have to consider the team as serious contenders for as long as their work is so good.

What, in your view, is the particular

quality that make the Cosworth-powered Williams quite so fast and consistent ?

A car is a combination of elements making a single element. I think that in overall examination, the Williams is both mechanically and aerodynamically beyond the reach of its rivals. Quite apart from that, Jones and Reutemann are just as quick as one another, in front of everyone in fact.

People say a great deal about the car when it come to a driver's performance. In this context, what do you think about Jean-Pierre Jarier who keeps losing his drives only to bounce back to the top when he can ?

I don't really know what to say. But I'm certain that Jarier has the qualities required to be a top driver, may be the best. But perhaps he isn't consistent enough. Honestly, I really don't know. Anyway, it's not very easy for me to judge the qualities or faults of another driver.

Fairly soon from now the Alfa turbo engine will be in use. You've always said that you'd like return to Indianapolis and win. Might these two facts be allied in some way ?

Taking into account the current situation, I'd really like to work with Alfa Romeo for a long time, because I think we both have a good future ahead of us. It would be a pretty big deal to take Alfa Romeo to Indy, given that I know Indianapolis and the American public. It's an idea that I've been promoting for a while, and up until now, no one from Alfa Romeo has said no.

When you were with Lotus, you had one young Italian, Elio de Angelis as teammate, and now with Alfa you have another, Bruno Giacomelli. How have you got on with Bruno over the past months during the off-season ?

Oh, Bruno ? No problem, really. We always seem to get on fine. He is really a pleasant fellow, and quite quiet. He does his job and I do mine. He's great.

Although you drove occasionally for Ferrari, you've spent most of your Formula One career with English teams. What are the differences between the English teams and one like Alfa-Romeo, which some people say is even more Italian than Ferrari ?

It's a question of the people and their characters. Everyone is involved and enthusiastic at Alfa Romeo which sometimes makes people think that the team is disorganised. The fact is that the job is always done and everyone has a common aim. It just so happens that we go about things in a different way because we're Italian. It's something that will never change.

What is your main ambition in Formula One ? Would you like to see an American team in Grand Prix racing, or would you prefer to make Alfas World Champions ?

To tall you the truth, I'm perfectly happy where I am. At one time in my career, I was tempted to work with an American team but that was simply because that course of action was the easiest way of getting a number one seat in a team which wasn't too easy for me at that time. But I'm not the least bit interested nor ambitious to fellow in Dan Gurney's footsteps. He could have been World Champion but instead be wanted to run his own car and engine. What is important for me is winning. Of course it would be marvellous to win for Alfa Romeo because it's flashback to when I was a lot younger and used to dream of doing so.

What do you think of Clay Regazzoni's legal action against the Long Beach circuit in which he claims damages under the pretext that the security mesures weren't up to standard ?

Well, first of all let's remember that it isn't Regazzonni who is saying that, it's the lawyers who are suing. Having said that, no track in the World is totally safe. There are lots of improvements to be made, but one has to point them out to the organisers. It's not that they don't want to make those improvements, it's just that far too ofthen no one officially points them out. They do doings as they're told to by the safety commission and they're considered to be the right things. There are certains measures that we have to accept and we do so. I'm just sorry that Clay feels forced to do what he's done. In fact I feel sorry for everything that's happened to him in the past year.

Despite this less pleasant side to the sport, you're preparing your son to follow in your footsteps. He's going to race in Formula Three soon, but what are your hopes of him ?

First of all, let me say that I'm not helping Mike that much. I want him to succeed on his own. He can count on me for advice but that's all. If he's good and turns out to be a gifted racer then he'll succeed.

As for my hopes for him, I've got just one : that he gets to my age intact. I'm an old 41-years-old in Formula One, but I'm still one of the boys at Indy. And that's with 20 years of racing behind me. □

JONES ON JONES

The World Champion and the Queen Mary, two stars of Long Beach

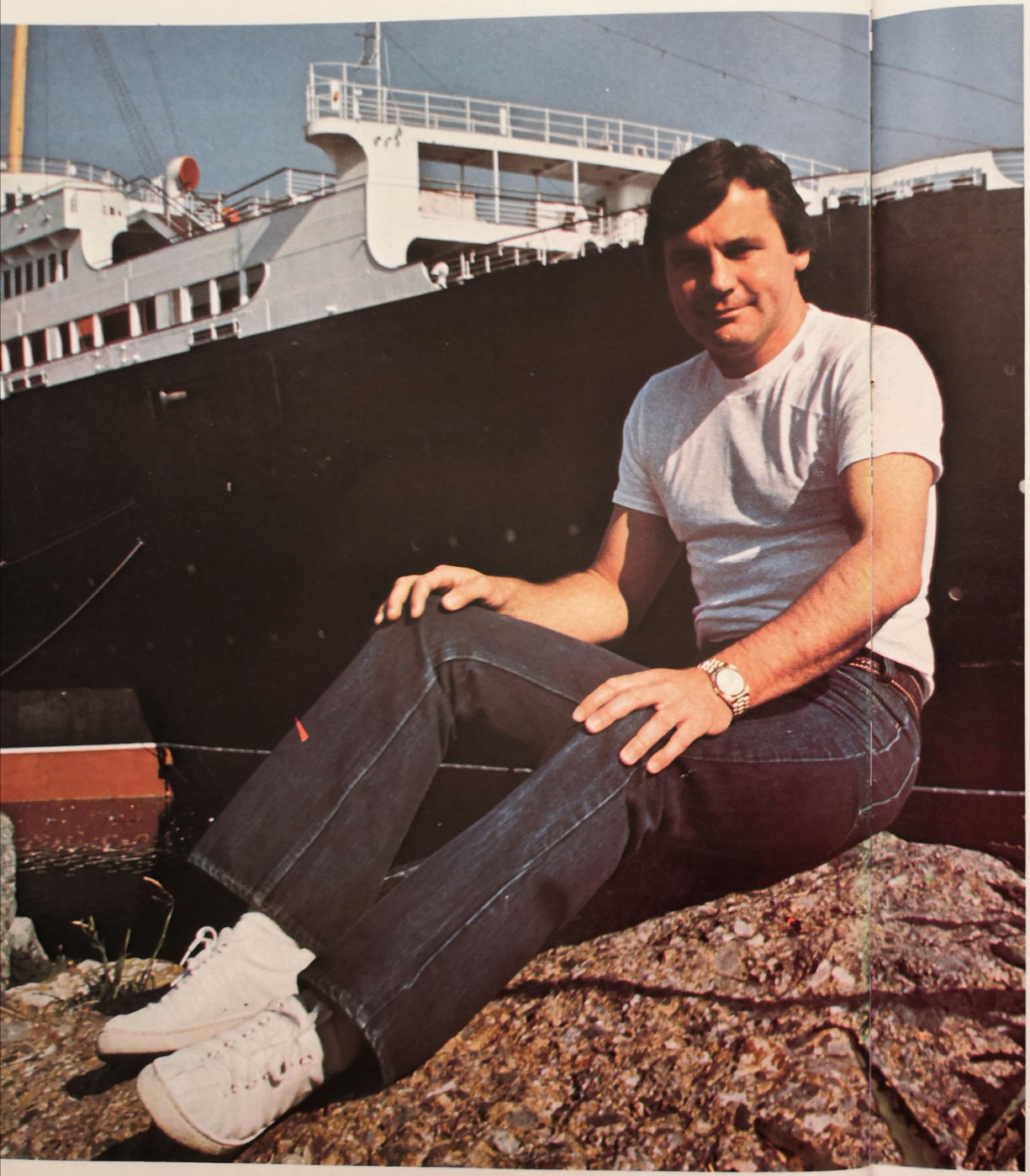
Alan Jones is certainly Formula One's current star. He's the reigning World Champion and the winner of the first Grand Prix of the year. Most World Champions write or ghost their biographies after they've won the title and Jones is happily no exception. Jones has written half the book in his own words and with lots of patience and enthusiasm, the English Sunday Times' motor racing writer Keith Botsford has written the other half from an objective point of view. The book reveals another side of Alan Jones, one that is virtually unknown to most people as they more often come up against the Australian's gruff exterior. The book will be published in England at the same time as the Monaco Grand Prix,but Grand Prix International is able to bring you three exclusive extracts from Jones's book. From this you will realise that Jones isn't simply a good driver, but an interesting and objective writer.

I can get into a situation in a race — and I can only regret that I have not yet learned how to bring this state of mind about deliberately — when I can get into a real high. I don't know how I get into it, I can't bring it on by an act of will, otherwise I'd do it from the first lap every time ! But sometimes on the third lap, sometimes half way through the race. I get into this high. Then I can drive, on the limit, all day.

It no longer affects me whether its 140 degrees or 40 : neither temperature nor any other outside circumstance is of any consequence at all. The feeling is fantastic My concentration is 1,000 percent ; I enjoy every second of what I'm doing ; I lap super-quick. It's a form of euphoria. Nothing can beat me and I can drive like that all day until I run of fuel. The race seems to go very quickly : before I know it, the pits are hanging out a sign saying ten laps to go.

There are other races which seem 500 laps long. I ache and think, oh god ! I wish this bloody thing would come to an end.

Luckily, races like that are a minority. In most, I seem to get into a groove.



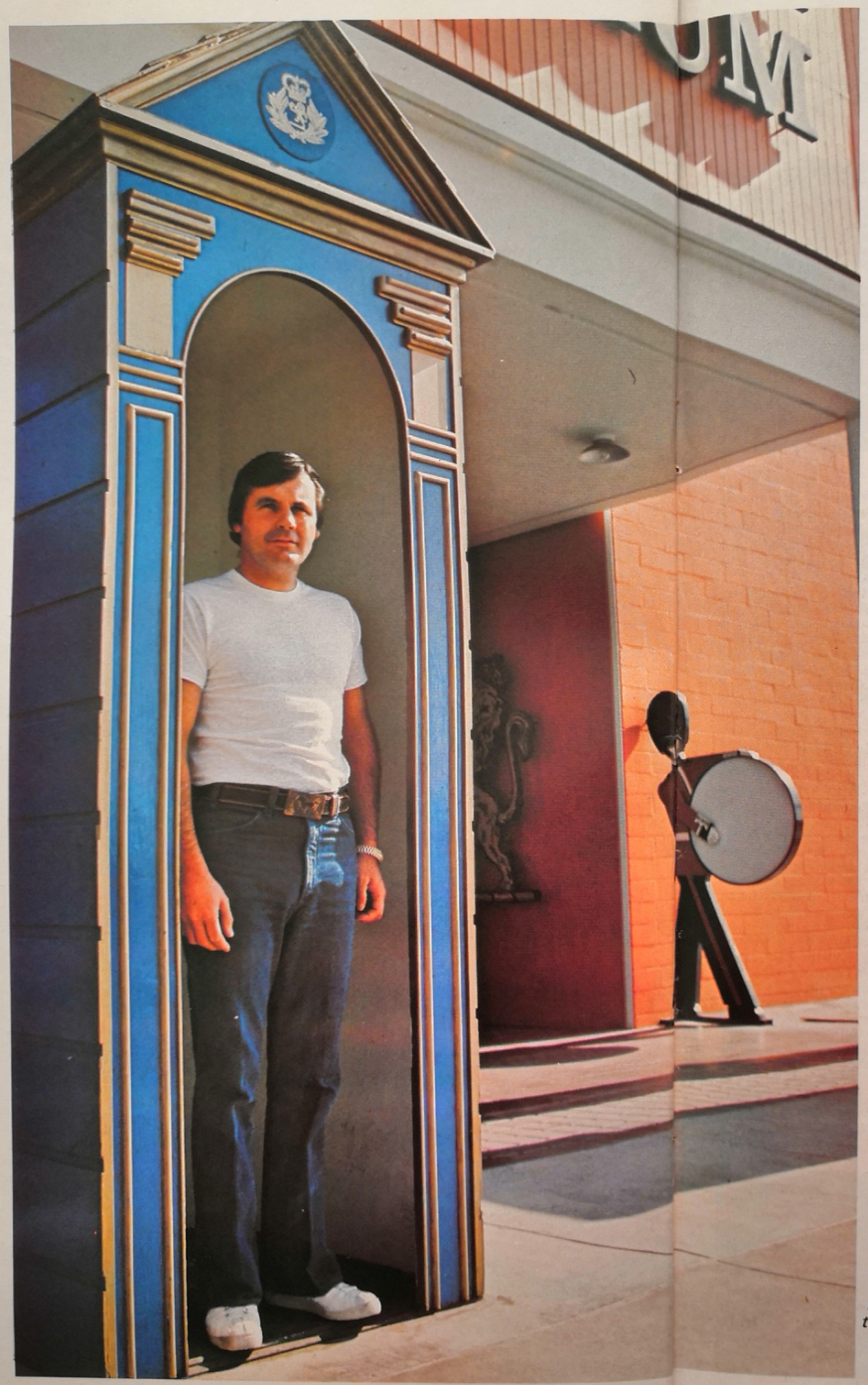
Jones began the defence of his World Championship crown at Long Beach

and when I'm in that groove, I can go on forever. I wish I knew how I got into that state. I don't. I simply find myself in it. I don't sit there saying, ah, here comes my groove ; at some point I'm just in it.
Then I drive out of that window in my helmet. I look through that window and what I see out of that window is the sole and only thing that exists in the whole wide world ; everything is happening out there in front of me. All my legs and arms and every other part of me are just parts of a whole and doing what they're supposed to be doing automatically, so that I don't have to think consciously about gearing or braking or accelerating,that's all going on without any orders on my part. I concentrate, intensely, on everything that's in front of me : be it a car or a corner,there's an invisible line extending from that window in my head to whatever's next. My body is in unison. It doesn't really exist ; it's compacted, the whole of me is bunched up tight inside that little area of plexiglass, I'm entirely in my helemt and I think of myself as being the helmet, looking out. Everything, body or car, obeys that module.
The sensation is not physical. Nor is it the tunnel vision so many drivers talk about,which is to block everything else out of your mind. I don't feel I'm missing anything. If anything, I'm seeing more than I ever have before. My vision is elarged and the sensation is purely mental.

I think it fair to say that we're a callous lot about death. If I were killed tomorrow, Frank would probably say, that's too bad, he was a bit of a character. The truth may not be attractive, but it mains true. Frank is in the business of motor racing and in his plans, I am a cog. If I go,Frank must replace me. If Carlos were killed, I'd say, poor Carlos ; and then I'd ask Frank who he had in mind to take his place.
It's something we have to live with. All of us. It sounds cold, but it's just one of the many sad facts of the business I happen to be in. We are bloody mercenaries and we can't get hysterical every time someone gets killed.If you wept over each death during a civil war in the Congo, you have no business being a mercenary.If it wouldn't work in the Congo, it won't work on the circuit.
In the old days, a race might stop for a fatality. Teams withdrew from the sport, drivers gave up their careers in sorrow at the loss of a friend.
Racing was very different back then. It was neither so practical nor so professional and there weren't as many interests involved. Who can afford to stop now ? Would the sponsors approve ? The circuit owners ? The constructors ? Those were amateur days, even as to death. We've changed our attitudes, having seen more of death than they had, and seen it clearly, watched it on the box.Who mourns anyone today ? Who wears little bits of black cloth in their lapels ? What widows get themselves kitted out in black ?
When Ascari was killed and Lancia withdrew their cars, it was against a backdrop of a public who reacted to death, sudden, violent death, very differently from the way we see it. The papers and the box are full of death. Thousands and thousands get killed on the roads every year. Almost everyone who drives has seen the blood and the wreckage. Back then, if Lancia had gone on racing,the public would have thought they were a callous lot and not bought their cars.
Today all is commerce and cold blood. Do I approve or disapprove ? I don't do either. I recognise things as being the way they are. Alfa didn't pull out when Patrick was killed. They got on with racing, which was why Depailler was testing and why they built the car for him to test.
If I got killed, I wouldn't expect Frank to pull out, and I don't think Frank would even dream that I wanted him to.We all know what we're doing, we all know the risks and we've all got our money and our deals as a form of compensation. My deal is that I get so many pounds to drive for Frank and do the best I can : risks included, because the risks are necessary to get the results. If I get killed in the course of duty, that's my bad luck. It shouldn't be anyone else's bad luck.
But if I'm going to kill myself in a car, it had better be worth it. People call up all the time and say, look, drive this, drive that. And I say, sure, give me X thousand pounds and I'll drive it. They wet their pants. They say,but the car didn't even cost that much ! I tell them it doesn't matter how much the car cost,they can always make another one. But my life comes dear. Divide my total earnings in Formula One up by the number of races I do for Frank each year and that's my price for putting myself on the line. If I hurt myself driving for less, I'd lose my money from Formula One. It's a cash transaction. Even death is.

* * *

A lot of people say, now I'm World Champion, I won't try so hard. But I am not racing to be World Champion, which I am and which can't be taken away from me. I go racing because I still want to, and because I want people to respect me for that. I have to be quickest for me, not for anyone else.That attitude has helped me brush aside the pressure and the politics. What gets my blood up is to be in the car, racing.I know it's insular and narrow-minded, but it works for me.
I don't know how long I can keep that competitive spirit going. No one can foresee that,because it's a state of mind. I might wake up one morning, a lovely spring morning on my farm and think, there's no way I'm going to leave this behind me. My appetite might have waned,or business might be good and I might be deriving equal pleasure from that.
At the moment, I'm still single-minded. I've only got attention to spare for what I'm actually doing.God willing, if I get through it all, I'll be a bit broader in my mind than I am now. I know it is going on, because I seem to change all the time. My tastes change, and I expect that the day will come when I know who I am and I will settle for that. Today, it's all change and movement. Daily, I find myself more relaxed, more philosophical.
Of course I'm going to try to be champion again.What else,or what more can I do ? I have faith in my team and I know I'm good.
But somewhere deep down inside me, I recognise that I'm very cold-blooded.I may be sentimental or nostalgic, I like to think of myself in another period like the Thirties or Forties where there fewer restrictions on life and life was freer and gayer,but I am a cold person. Very cold. Indifferent and cold.
Beverly would agree I'm cold and unromantic. I love her very much and treasure my family life ; I plan to be no less than a patriarch with kids and property. But few things actually touch me. I am not moved. I do not shed many tears. I feel for the underdog, it is possible for me to cry over injustice, but death leaves me cold.
A lot of my life has been repression. I check myself a lot. In feeling, certainly. I was a kid who went dancing and wouldn't ask the girl to dance in case she rejected me. Pride is involved and insecurity. Stubbornness and an inability to take things as they come, or to let my true feelings show.
As I said, I'm an egotist's son and an egotist myself. My egotistical high comes from the actual racing, not from its sideshows. Maybe when I retire, I'll let myself go. Or perhaps I am frightened at the idea of letting myself go.
Meanwhile, the repression remains strong. I have to sit on myself. I may feel like a disco or a girl or a few beers but I have to say to myself all the time, no you can't, no I won't, it's salad and bed-time for you. The more you repress, the bigger the build up and the eventual explosion. Every Sunday after a race I'm like a balloon that's been pricked with a pin, the air just whistles out of me. Then comes the big meal and the laughs. And there are going to be a lot more of those, because one day there's not going to be another race after a Sunday night.
I have to sit on myself because I know what I want and where I'm going in life. My biggest want is to be on top, and that means sitting on the beast in me to get there.
If I live through this, I may become a great bore, but I am going to enjoy having lived through it. I'll have worked for it, I'll have survived the dice and I'll deserve a good remainder to my life.
Meanwhile, one of my liabilities is that I think a great deal more than I say. There are people who can say exactly what they think, in speech or in writing. They can express the whole complexity of their life. In my case,whether through liaziness or concealment, I can only express a small part of it. Perhaps I have neither the time nor the desire to put myself into words.
So far, I have expressed my life in my racing, and who I am will not come out until I've finished. □



Horsepower on the road and on track, Leyland sponsorship in each case

LOTUS 88: DOUBLE OR QUIT

Colin Chapman was at pains to point out to the specialist press at the presentation of his latest car, the Lotus 88, that it was legal. The innovative English designer made it absolutely clear that according to his interpretation of the regulations, the car was perfectly legal. He was obviously expecting his constructor colleagues to kick up merry hell - and they did. He scored a record high of eleven protests against the Lotus 88.

by Giorgio PIOLA

COLIN Chapman was expecting his rivals to protest the car. He didn't blame them. In fact when the car was unveiled at London's Heathrow Hotel a week before the Grand Prix, he commented *« that it's quite normal for a designer to stir up protest with a revolutionary idea. To be honest if someone else came up with something similarly novel, I'd try and find some reason for throwing out the car... and I'd be forced tp admit that there was no way. Instead I'd have to find a camera, photograph it, and build a copy as soon as possible. »*

The Lotus 88 is undeniably one of the most interesting cars built over the last few years. The car is totally original, having two independent chassis both of which have a specific job to do. Without prononcing judgement on its legality, one has to admit that it's a neat idea.

The idea originated from the Lotus 80 - and its failure. The car showed good results in the wind tunnel, gave a lot of downthrust yet never behaved as well on the track. In order to obtain the same downthrust on the track as in the wind tunnel, extremely hard springs had to be used so as to keep the car's ride height horizontal. When a car is under braking, all downforce is transferred to the front which causes oversteer. When the car is under acceleration, the downforce is on the back which causes understeer. And when the car rolls, one sidepod gives more downforce than the other, which unbalances the car as well.

In order to combat these unequal longitudinal and lateral downforces it was essential to use very hard spring which made the car virtually undriveable. Further more - and almost more important - the hard springing caused a lot of vibration which in turned resulted in mechanical breakages, either to suspension mounting points or to the chassis.

Chapman's solution was to separate the two functions. One chassis was necessary to cope with and deal with the aerodynamic loads, and the other would house the driver and mechanical elements in relative comfort because each chassis would have its own suspension system.

And that's the way Chapman built up his

car. The interior chassis, or secondary chassis as Chapman deems it, is shaped like a normal monocoque. It's softly suspended so that the car retains good traction and handling as well as the driver comfort already mentioned. Chapman's baby is the exterior chassis which takes all the aerodyanamic load and is very hard sprung. The other constructors reckon that this is a mobile aerodynamic device, and therefore illegal. But according to Chapman, it is in line with the regulations because the bodywork has to be fixed rigidly to a portion of the car that is suspended. That's the case with the Lotus 88. Chapman has neatly bent the rules, which only goes to show that they lack precision.

The exterior chassis is composed of two three centimeter wide rails running down the side of the car, connected by three more rails running across the car and supporting the bodywork. Air intakes are situated in the side pods in order to cool the radiators which are also mounted on the exterior chassis. At times the inner chassis is lower than the outer chassis and vice versa, so the radiator hoses have to be flexible.

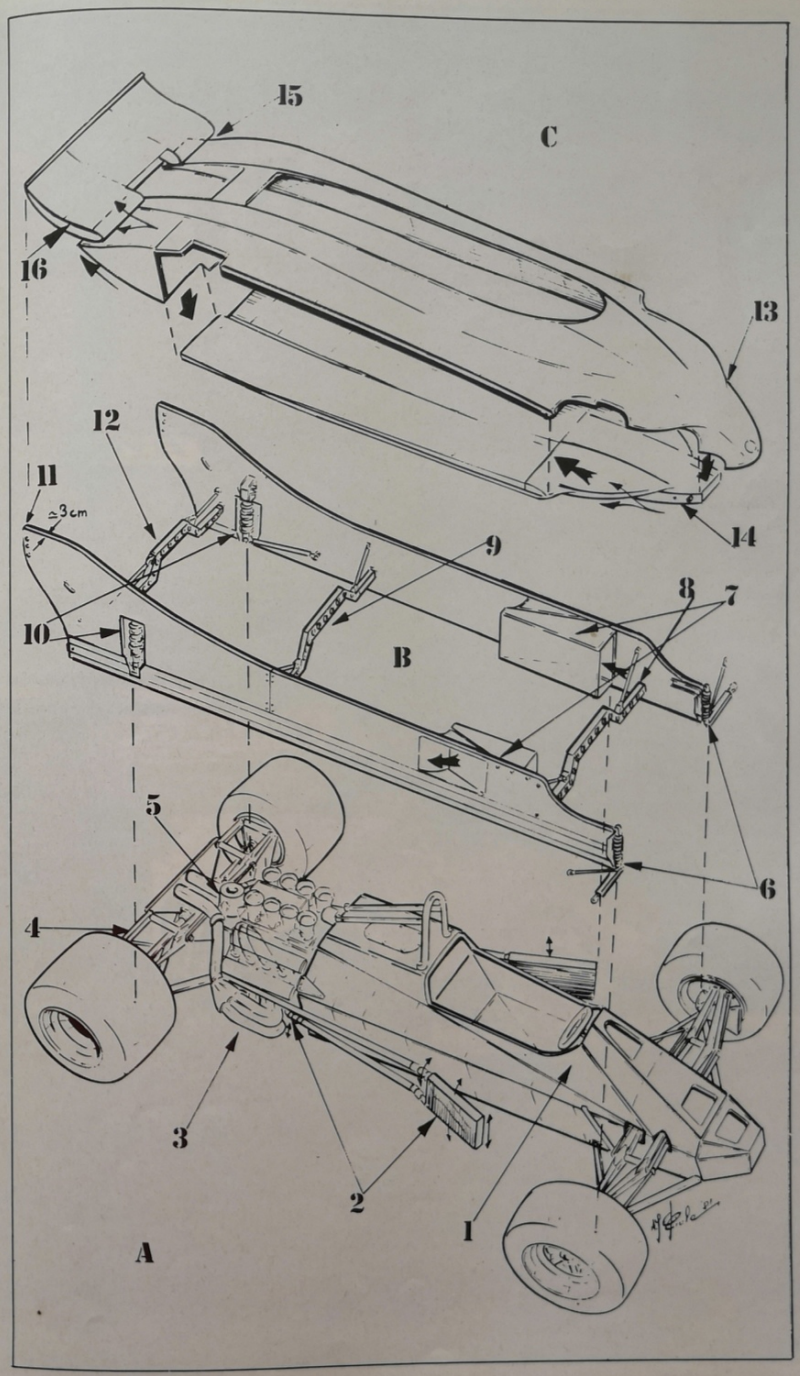
The exterior chassis has its own separate suspension system, positioned higher than the interior chassis' suspensions system in order to avoid interaction.

Apart from its twin-chassis principle, even the fabrication of the Lotus 88 is interesting. The chassis are made of a mixture of carbon fibre and Kevlar. The carbon fibre is strong and light but very brittle, but the Kevlar is resistant and also light. The two work well together, and save around 15 kilos in weight over the normal aluminium chassis.

The Lotus 88 is also only 110 cms wide which allows for a clean air flow under the car.

The 80's rounded side pods were subjected to turbulence from the rear wheels and consequently the rear underside of the car worked badly. The 88's side pods are completely separate from the rear wheels. Special attention has been given to the air outflow. The wing profiles are very low in order to allow the halfshafts to be integrated into the bodywork. When one looks at the 88 from low down, the lower wishbone is almost the only part visible. This means that the venturi is very clean and uncluttered leaving the wing profile to work over its whole length, making the aerodynamic system very efficient, especially because the rear flap - there is no wing - plays the role of extractor.

It is quite a surprising car, not only because of the ideas involved, but also because of its weight. The 88 has two chassis and two suspension systems, yet it's still on the weight limit. □



C - BODYWORK

13 - The nose on the 88 is very rounded and short. The bodywork is much wider than the interior chassis in order to allow unimpeded independent movement

14 - The underbody joins up with the upper bodyword

15 - Rear section is totally enclosed

16 - The rear end works as an extractor

B - EXTERIOR CHASSIS

6 - Very hard springs for the chassis which takes the aerodynamic load

7 - Radiator mountings

8 - 9 - 12 - Cross-rails onto which the bodywork is mounted

10 - Exterior chassis rear spring mounts

11 - The side rails form the frame of the chassis

A - INTERIOR CHASSIS

1 - The chassis is made of carbon fibre and Kevlar

2 - The radiators are mounted in the bodywork (7) which in turn is fixed to the exterior chassis. As the two chassis move independently, the radiator hoses are flexible.

3 - New exhaust system

4 - Fabricated rear suspension

5 - Oil tank

DOCTOR RICCARDO ANDMISTER PATRESE

« Dangerous, » Unsportsmanlike, » « Spiteful, » « Bad-tempered, » « Cruel. » With epithets like these (and more) heaped upon him, Riccardo Patrese can flatter himself that he has attracted more vindictiveness from the press than any F1 driver before him. The truth is that Riccardo Patrese's most serious mistake is that he has never won a Grand Prix. If he had achieved such a success, everyone would be defending him stoutly against those undeserved charges. With pole position at Long Beach behind him, it is possible to lift a corner of the curtain which hides his true character. And a man who collects model trains and enjoys the friendship of Jochen Mass can't possibly be all bad.

by Giorgio PIOLA

Patrese isn't really aggressive as a person, more shy. He may be a hard racer but he's pleasant to be with. His reputation is a lot blacker than the man himself. Jochen Mass helped Riccardo tidy up his public relations.

Dave Wass has clearly made the Arrows A3 into a front runner, but was this performance a one-off for Riccardo Patrese ? There's one thing for sure. One never wins pole position by chance.

THE hour of revenge very nearly struck at Long Beach for Riccardo Patrese, Formula I's unloved son. It is a revenge for which this young man from Padua has been waiting ever since the end of 1978. It was a year that began promisingly, with a remarkable run in first place at Kyalami soon to be followed in Sweden by a second place fought with an on-form Ronnie Peterson. But the season was to end in the drama of the accident at Monza for which the FI barons like Lauda, Hunt, Andretti and Scheckter were quick to declare Patrese responsible. From that moment onwards, both in the eyes of his peers and those of the public, Riccardo Patrese became a " dangerous " driver.

It was a reputation which his conduct in races (and several accidents) has been unable to repair. What's more, Riccardo undoubtedly has the most unfathomably difficult character of any of the present FI drivers. There is also the question of the judicial problems which the Arrows team – for which he was and still is the number one driver – encountered when sued by Shadow (resulting in a decision which upheld the Shadow charge of plagiarism). Yet Patrese is the first to admit his faults in his relations both with the press and with his fellow F1 drivers.

"It's quite true," he confesses, *"that I have very few friends in the sport. I'm a closed person, and people have a tendency to confuse this with aggressivity when in fact I'm really a very shy person.*

" I don't like to be in crowd. What I like best after a race is to go home and lock myself up with my electric trains. You may think that sounds a bit childish for a Formula 1 driver, but I have more than 60 model locomotives. It's a hobby that I share with my brother, who's an engineer. Our ambition one day is to have our own full-size electric train.

" So much for the unknown side of my life. But in racing, to succeed you must be really tough , not just with competitors but with yourself. It's one of the rules of the game. On the other hand, my most important personal quality is my stubborness. If, psychologically, I have succeeded in overcoming the various difficulties which I have encountered in my driving career, I owe it all to my strength of character."

Patrese does not like to drag up his own memories of what hapened at Monza. When the question is raised,

→

though, he does not hesitate : *''my conscience is clear. If it were not, that race would have broken me. The whole business is going to be finally decided by a court hearing which will take place in Italy this year. I am relieved. All the doubts will be settled at last.''*

But Patrese's character has forced him into mistakes several times during his career : *''I didn't know enough to grab three great opportunities which were offered to me at various periods. The first was when I turned down an offer to follow Alan Jones, my then teammate at Shadow, into the Williams team as his number 2. Alan was very persuasive, but I just couldn't raise any faith in the Williams team as it then was.*

''The second time was when I was offered a place at Brabham to be Niki Lauda's number 2. I wasn't keen to play second fiddle to Niki, and anyway I was still hoping to join Ferrari. To any driver, especially if he's Italian, it's a dream to get an invitation to go to Ferrari. They spoke to me after Kyalami in 1978, but they never followed it through with an offer. It's a matter of history now, it's in the past. But I want the truth to come out, because Ferrari put out rumours that my financial demands were unacceptable. That is entirely false. You hardly consider the cash side when you're asked to drive for Ferrari. In fact, I believe that they had decided they didn't want an Italian driver in the team.''

Throughout the winter of 1980/81, Patrese had great difficulty in finding the right F1 place. Now he's proved his point with a brilliant run in first place at Long Beach. *''After five years and 50 Grands Prix, it hurts your ego not to receive a single F1 proposal. I had the feeling that I was being overlooked and rejected. My pole position is a way of demonstrating to those who had no confidence in me. Last year I went through a very tough period. The team was making absolutely no progress with the car, relations among the management were deteriorating fast, and then all our problems were topped by the decision by the sponsor (Warsteiner) to pull out.''*

It was during the 1980 season that Tony Southgate, the chief engineer at Arrows, left the team. *''I have always had a good relationship with Tony. But in spite of my admiration for his abilities, it has to be said that he made a lot of modifications without much in the way of results. Still, by getting rid of Southgate we forced ourselves to jump into the unknown. I had only worked with his deputy, Dave Wass. in 1977, when Tony was looking after Alan Jones's car. Last year, though, Wass's analysis of the situation fitted in with the opinions that Jochen Mass and I had about the car.''*

The way that Arrows MD Jack Oliver tells it, the story of the team's change of engineer would have a theatre audience weeping in the aisles : *''Dave had always been number two to Tony Southgate. He would often tell me that there were things he would like to try on the car, or that he thought it was a mistake to change something else. But Southgate was the chief engineer. Dave felt slightly humiliated and last year he said that he wanted to leave the team. We had to make a choice then between Southgate and him. I hope very much that Alan Ress and I have made the right decision, because we have given him the opportunity to show what he can do. It's the chance of a lifetime for Dave. We hope that he's worthy of it.''*

Like Patrese, Dave Wass suffers from shyness. But the resemblance stops there. The team's new engineer is affable and concerned. *''I think that Riccardo suffers from not being approached in the right way,''* he says. *''Initially I had my own doubts about*

his character, but now that I've been able to get his confidence we are working together in perfect harmony. The problem which had us stuck in 1980 was understeer : when I took over the technical department at Arrows, I made some major changes to the rear suspension to make the car's handling more balanced.

In Formula 1 there tends to be a cult following of the so-called ''technical geniuses.'' This does not sit well with Wass, a dedicated anti-star status engineer. *''I prefer a designer like Patrick Head, whose success is due to the excellence of his detail work, rather than the spectacular innovators who like to follow the Chapman school of thought. From time to time they open the door on a major innovation but they never seem to carry it through to its ultimate, and often they end up by being beaten by their own inventions.''* To tell the truth, Patrese's pole position is not so much significant insofar as its driver's abilities are concerned as for the fact that it marks the resurgence of a car which seemed to have go stuck among the midfield worthies of Formula 1. Indeed, the most important thing which occurred at Long Beach may prove to be what happened to Patrese's personal character. At the age of 26, he seems to have undergone a metamorphosis : he has apparently given up his Buster Keaton gloominess, for there are those who will swear to having seen him smile.

''I admit that I was worried at the start of this season'', he says. *''I was concerned that I might find myself in the same position as last year. We now have a chance of putting together a successful season.*

''But don't try to imagine that I have got back my taste for racing. That would be wrong, because I never lost it. Now, with skirts banned, the driver is going to become the most important factor in the team once again. I am sure that with the help of the people in our team I can take over the full role of a leader. I think that Arrows will stay in front when we get to South America. After that, other teams will be presenting new cars, and I am worried that our finances are still rather limited. Even more than usual, the first few races of this new season constitute transitional events. I was particularly impressed by the Ferraris. With their turbo engines, they won't be racing in the same class as us.

''As for the question about my character having changed, I do not think I am the right person to reply. I do think that I am becoming more outgoing. That's all thanks to Jochen Mass, who was my team mate at Arrows for two years. There is no better teacher than Jochen when it comes to learning how to enjoy the pleasures of life and overcome one's shyness ! He's an expert in the subject. We have become extremely good friends, in fact I now regard him as an elder brother.''

Before the start of the race at Long Beach, almost as if he had received a strange forewarning of the disappointment he was to suffer, Patrese seemed to feel that he would be quite happy with his pole position alone. But when he was forced to give up his lead and pull into the pits with fuel feed trouble, having put up a tremendous show against both Williams, he was entitled to the gesture with his helmet which indicated his frustration : *''everything was going well. If I had felt that I was unable to hold off Reutemann under pressure, I would have let him overtake immediately, in order to attack him later on. But the machinery let me down. I'm not sure whether I'm supposed to be happy or whether I should go off and have a good cry. I've had enough compliments and slaps on the back, after leading the Grand Prix in '78 at Kyalami. I just wonder if I shall ever again have the opportunity which slipped away from me today...''* □

REFLECTIONS

BY ALAIN PROST

It may seem rather strange, but I suppose that I was one of the few people not to have been disappointed by the Renault's relatively poor performance at Long Beach. But don't imagine that I'm trying to hide the reality of the situation. I would certainly have prefered to have made it a little further than the first corner in my first race for Renault. However, it seems that de Cesaris thought otherwise.

There are two circuits which are definitely not Renault circuits : those in the streets of Long Beach and Monaco. So we never really stood a chance from the start. The season began at Long Beach and we were just not going to have a chance. Twisty circuits just don't suit our car. There are two reasons for that. The first is that there's always a turbo lag, and secondly the car doesn't pull away well at low revs. When we do get some response, it's very brutal. The power doesn't come in progressively but brutally which makes the wheels spin. Our two problems really handicapped us as they will on any tight circuit with sharp corners. Driving the Renault on such circuits is a very delicate business. But let me say again that this wasn't news to us. We knew what to expect long before we arrived in Long Beach.

For that reason, there was no point in being disappointed by our rather lack-lustre performances at Long Beach, because neither René nor I expected any better. Now if the season had begun in South America as it was meant to have done, then things might have been very different. We might even have kicked off with a couple of wins. After all, Renault didn't do badly last year down there.

But at Long Beach, things weren't on our side at all. Apart from the two reasons already given, we also had another handicap. This is a point I want to make particularly to those English readers loyal to FOCA. The banning of skirts for us was as much a handicap as the lack of qualifiying tyres.

Both these measures restrict grip in corners which is just where we, in particular, need it most. You can't keep up the revs if you don't have any grip, and if you don't keep up the revs, it takes a while before you can get those revs back, especially with a turbo that lags. Does Riccardo Patrese's pole position in the Arrows mean that he's going to be the fastest car throughout the season, even in South America ? The answer to that might lie in the lesson learnt last year when Jan Lammers set fourth fastest time in the ATS here at Long Beach. Where was that car on the grid for the rest of the year ? Hopefully our performance at Long Beach won't be a pointer for the rest of the year.

Personally, I reckon that I could been sixth or seventh quickest on the grid if I hadn't had to take over the spare car when I lost fourth gear in my own race car. I don't think that would have been a bad position on the grid, considering the cars' natural disadvantage on the tight circuit. We tried everything to make up for our lack of grip. We put on more wing, fitted softer springs, everything. It improved the car a little bit, but we still had the same basic problem.

I think my first session times at Long Beach weren't bad at all, and I hope that people aren't too disappointed in those times. I know a number of people were disappointed overall, but I don't think they looked hard enough at our inherent problems. Now if we're on the third or forth row at Buenos Aires, then I do think that they've got something to grumble about. But I hope we won't give them any reason for grumbling.

There are often little points made during practice which never get any further. Something occurred at Long Beach which really gives me hope for the future with Renault. We practised with full tanks only a second slower than we had with relatively empty tanks. For most teams, the gap is around two seconds.

After my premature exit from competition, I stayed at the end of the straight to watch what was going on. Drivers and designers rarely get a chance to see other Formula One cars going though a corner. They're either in the car or in the pits, so it was interesting to analyse some of the cars' behaviour. René, of course, was in dreadful trouble, but I saw the new Ferraris were very very quick in a straight line, and they pulled out of the hairpin with considerable ease. There's obviously lots of torque in that engine. It will be interesting to see a contest between the Renaults and Ferraris, turbo to turbo, in the next few races. Could be quite a fight ! □

L.B. TECHNICALITIES

SAUDIA LEYLAND WILLIAMS

Williams-Ford FW 07/11 :
Alan Jones (AUS)
Williams-Ford FW 07/12 :
Carlos Reutemann (RA)
Williams-Ford FW 07/10 :
spare.

Frank Williams's team took two entirely new chassis to Long Beach which were clothed in revised bodywork. The monocoques themselves were more square in shape and were also stronger. A new deformable structure at the front of the monocoque not only protected the driver's feet but also supported the front wing. On the new chassis, the rocker arm mountings points to the uprights were relocated in order to suit Michelin radial tyres that were used on all cars. The bodywork was considerably revised with new fins rising just in front of the rear wheels. The spare comprised an old chassis with old bodywork and the old style front wing but with bigger nose fins. Patrick Head hadn't sought sophisticated solutions to the skirts ban. As usual he'd gone for simplicity, and as before, it worked.
Jones had a little off during practice but that didn't prevent him from starting the race from the front row beside Patrese and a long way in front of the rest. The two Williams cars dominated the race, not purely in terms of speed but also reliability, something that is rapidly becoming one of the hallmarks of the Williams team.

PARMALAT BRABHAM

Brabham-Ford BT 49/11 :
Nelson Piquet (BR)
Brabham-Ford BT 49/12 :
Hector Rebaque (MEX)
Brabham-Ford BT 49/9 : spare.

All three Brabhams were clothed in new bodywork, principally the rear section previously seen on the spare car only in South Africa. There were two new chassis and one old. On the first day the cars were fitted with a device which could well have created just as much fuss as the Lotus 88 did but for the fact that it didn't immediately work. This was a hydraulic suspension system linked to the shock absorber springs which allowed the bodywork to drop once the car was in motion. However the system wasn't entirely tested and despite Gordon Murray's hopes, it was abandoned for Saturday practice. The springs worked from a little compressed air bottle mounted on the right hand side pod of the car.
The Brabhams actually seemed to be relatively unaltered considering the disappearance of skirts. Rebaque's car was still fitted with the Weismann gearbox. As the side pod profiles remained hidden, it was only the bigger front nose fins that were actually noticeable novelties.
Piquet wasn't particularly happy with his car's handling. It wouldn't turn in properly to corners. During the race, the 1980 Long Beach winner was never on terms with the Williams drivers. He had an early battle with the Ferraris but then pulled away to an untroubled and lonely third place. After two or three near misses, Rebaque hit the wall which eliminated him from the running.

TEAM TYRRELL

Tyrrell-Ford 010/3/6 :
Eddie Cheever (USA)
Tyrrell-Ford 010/1 :
Kevin Cogan (USA)
Tyrrell-Ford 010/2 :
spare

Ken Tyrrell's cars don't appear to have changed if appearances are anything to go by, but Eddie Cheever most certainly went well during practice for Long Beach. He was smooth through the corners, after his team worked hard to eliminate understeer. However they ended up with oversteer but Cheever found the car a joy to drive, particularly the braking. Teammate Cogan wasn't so lucky and wore his way through a number of second gears, the gear used more than any other at Long Beach. He didn't qualify and will be replaced by Ricardo Zunino in Brazil. In the race, Cheever lost second gear himself virtually immediately but he still managed to pick up a couple of well deserved points.

MARLBORO ALFA ROMEO

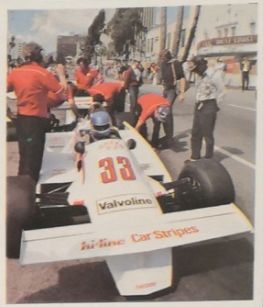
Alfa-Roméo 180/02 :
Mario Andretti (USA)
Alfa-Roméo 180/03 :
Bruno Giacomelli (I)
Alfa-Romeo 180/01 :
spare.

The Alfa-Romeo team brought new lighter chassis to Long Beach for their first race. The Alfa-Romeo didn't really seem to be happy without skirts, the cars never being balanced but the team reckons that they'll go better in Brazil. Twice on Friday Giacomelli hit the wall with his nose fins provoking a certain amount of confusion in the team's pits. On Saturday the team worked hard on the aerodynamics and Mario Andretti pronounced himself happy having qualified on the third row. However the spring/shock absorber combination chosen for the race turned out to be the wrong one and the cars lifted wheels throughout the race which didn't help traction. Andretti finished fourth. Giacomelli also suffered because of the spring/shock absorber combination but tangled with Lammers when trying to overtake Laffite and that was the end of his race.

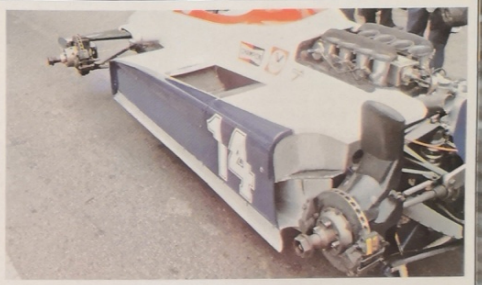
THEODORE RACING

Theodore-Ford TY 01/1

Patrick Tambay (F)



The Theodore was only completed the week before the Grand Prix, and had only two days testing at Willow Springs before being presented to the press. There were all sorts of teething troubles, including badly fitting bodywork, yet this Tony Southgate-designed car made the grid quite easily thanks to Tambay's enthusiastic driving. It was very encouraging for Teddy Yip's team to pick up a championship point in this very first event.



ENSIGN

Ensign-Ford MN 180 B/15 :
Marc Surer (CH)

With no money, the English team is scarcely in a position to perform miracles. The car at Long Beach was still fitted with side pods complete with skirt attachments for the team haven't even been able to afford to build new side pods. Another chassis is currently under construction at Ensign, identical to the current Ensign which has shed another ten kilos.
Surer went off at the beginning of practice and then broke two driveshafts in the afternoon. Fortunately he improved his time the next day despite too soft springing which caused the car to lift wheels. Surer kept up a regular rhythm during the race only to be sidelined right at the end by electrical trouble.

FITTIPALDI

Fittipaldi-Ford F8/3 :
Keke Rosberg (SF)
Fittipaldi-Ford F8/4 :
Chico Serra (BR)
Fittipaldi-Ford F8/2 :
spare.

The Fittipaldis were scarcely altered for Long Beach, for a new car is expected in June. While Rosberg was generally untroubled apart from a tyre stud breaking, Serra first of all suffered from poor gear selection and then on the second day the clutch started to fade, so he spent most of the time using the spare. Because of his tyre problem, Keke didn't improve his time on three new tyres and one used example. Only Serra managed to finish in a promising seventh place.

RENAULT ELF

Renault RE 278 :
René Arnoux (F)
Renault RE 26B :
Alain Prost (F)
Renault RE 22B :
spare.

The Renaults were both modified according to our last issue, that's to say the new side pods and bigger front and rear wings were fitted as seen at Circuit Paul Ricard. The RE 20B cars weren't ideal for Long Beach : too heavy and too big. They both suffered from lack of grip on the Friday, but improved during Saturday, although neither car was actually a front runner. Prost broke the gearbox in his own car and had to qualify in the spare in which he was destined to start as his own engine refused to start for the warm-up. However, he only did 100 yards before tangling with de Cesaris. Arnoux stopped early on complaining of vibration at the front, but the problem wasn't traced and he struggled home without ever curing the problem.
The new RE 30 should make its appearance at Imola. The car has been designed by computer and the chassis should be lighter and perhaps faster.

TALBOT LIGIER GITANES

Talbot-Matra JS 17 :
Jacques Laffite (F)
Talbot-Matra JS 17 :
Jean-Pierre Jarier (F)
Talbot-Matra JS 17 :
spare.

As Jabouille was still not fit to race, Jean-Pierre Jarier was brought into the team for this race and began the weekend with a superb second fastest time. Laffite had accelerator linkage problems which slowed him a little, but things were a lot worse the next day. Both cars were in trouble with understeer and lack of grip plus slow straight line speed. In the race, Laffite got up to sixth place before running into the back of Cheever. Jarier's engine lost power early on and finally he retired with fuel feed trouble.
This was the first time the Matra-powered Ligier Talbot had appeared. The chassis is well built and similar to last year's apart from the front section which has new suspension mounting points and better driver protection. Of all the current Formula One cars, the JS17 is the only one with the oil tank still mounted between the cockpit and the engine.

ESSEX LOTUS

Lotus-Ford 88/1 :
Elio de Angelis (I)
Lotus-Ford 81/2 :
Nigel Mansell (GB)
Lotus-Ford 81/3 :
spare

Long Beach should have marked the debut of the technically very interesting Lotus 88. That was indeed the case, but it was soured by the resulting furore. Both the political and technical angles of the Lotus 88 are covered in detail elsewhere in this issue.
De Angelis did only a few laps in the Lotus 88 over the two days of practice before being stopped by the black flag hung out by the clerk of the course. Not only is this car likely to be technically difficult to set up, but it may also take up much time to do so.
Mansell's 81 was fitted with a single wide front wing and a large rear wing. Later the same wings were flown over specially from England to be fitted to de Angelis's spare car which was in virtually the same trim as the skirted 81. It was this car in which he qualified.
Mansell went off during the warm-up and damaged his car which was repaired for the race, although another accident in the race, seemingly without cause, led the team to suspect that it was caused by breakage originating from the morning shunt. De Angelis suffered the same fate. Before leaving for Brazil, the Lotus team are expected to test the 88 at Riverside.

FERRARI SEFAC

Ferrari 126 C/051
Gilles Villeneuve (CDN)
Ferrari 126 C/050 :
Didier Pironi (F)

Since their official presentation, the Ferrari fitted with turbos and Comprex have developed considerably. The new chassis is much narrower at the bottom and it is also more rigid. The cars are also equipped with new brakes specially developed by Brembo. They're made of a single caliper with two master cylinders of different sizes. At the start of pratice, both race cars were fitted with Comprex systems, and the spare had a KKK turbo. Villeneuve quickly took over the spare having broken a belt on his own Comprex version. It was obviously a success because on Saturday both drivers were using KKK versions. But for their first official outing, both cars were impressive, if only because they were quicker than the Renaults throughout the week-end. The Ferrari men brought seven engines with them and after three days their load had lightened : one engine had broken and there were belt problems with the Comprex versions. Villeneuve's race was brought to a halt by a broken driveshaft and Pironi's race ended with an oil leak.

MARLBORO MCLAREN

McLaren-Ford M 29/4 :
John Watson (GB)
McLaren-Ford M 29/5 :
Andrea de Cesaris (I)
Marlboro-Ford MP4/1 :
Watson's spare
McLaren-Ford M29/2 :
De Cesaris's spare

Right from the start of practice, the MP4 proved to be impressive, principally because of its superb finish and design. The car has been built using a completely new process developed in the USA involving carbon fibre. The aerodynamics have had a lot of work done on them, particularly the interior air flow. However the most interesting part is the underside where a large and high venturi is noticeable. The rear suspension is also different, the lower wishbone forming an integral part of the upright. But the MP4 was clearly too new and was flown back to England after the race.
Watson was also suffering from a painful right wrist injured in a fall while playing squash, and that combined with his spare M 29 meant that both he and de Cesaris started from the back of the grid. The Italian got no further than the first corner, while Watson only lasted 16 laps before retiring with an engine problem which slowed the car after only a few laps

RAGNO BETA ARROWS

Arrows-Ford A3/03 :
Riccardo Patrese (I)
Arrows-Ford A3/06 :
Siegfried Stohr (I)
Arrows-Ford A3/02 :
spare.

The only noticeable modification to the Arrows was the large front wing but Riccardo Patrese proved to be very competitive and qualified on pole for the first time in his career. The A3 had been considerably lightened and the car clearly handled well on Michelin tyres following certain modifications. Stohr didn't qualify following numerous spins on Friday, crashing his own car on Saturday morning, and blowing the spare's engine on Saturday afternoon within minutes, leaving himself no car in which to qualify. Meanwhile Patrese worked hard on his car, even trying a forward mounted rear wing. During the race, Patrese found his car superb to drive and it was quick as well. However, he had to pit twice and finally retire with fuel pressure problems.

ATS WHEELS

ATS-Ford D4/05 :
Jan Lammers(NL)

The car taken to the USA was basically an old monocoque surrounded by new bodywork. There was a very rounded nose from which extended a large front wing. New side pods and large extractors in front of the rear wheels were also in evidence. The car lacked grip at both front and rear, understeering into corners and oversteering out so the ATS wasn't really competitive at Long Beach. Yet just one year ago, Jan Lammers qualified on the second row. Not surprisingly the team were disappointed : « we've we tried everything », said Lammers. « We have a new wing at the front, but it touches the ground. So we tried a narrower one but that doesn't work. On saturday the inside right wheel simply spun in the corners, so we put the car back to the way we had it before, but that is not very competitive. » Lammer's race was eventful to say the least. He was delayed by the Prost/de Cesaris incident, then he bent the front wing on Serra's car and finally retired after climbing back up the field only to tangle with Giacomelli.

The new ATS designed by Herve Guilpin should be ready for Imola.

DENIM OSELLA

Osella-Ford 592/03 :
Beppe Gabbiani (I)
Osella-Ford 592/04 :
Miguel-Angel Guerra (RA)

Both Osellas were entirely new for Long Beach, and Fozo Osella admitted that the race would be little more than a test session. At the start of practice Gabbiani didn't really have any problems apart from hitting the wall lightly. But the next day he ran out of petrol and was unable to improve his time quite as much he'd like to. Furthermore his car didn't turn into the corners well and it didn't have good traction out of the corners. Guerra used the spare car on the first day because his own car's engine

misfired. Consequently his own car wasn't properly set up the next day and it didn't handle well. He didn't qualify. The Osella men are already looking forward to Brazil where the cars will be fitted with progressive springing at the rear while at Imola they should have adjustable suspension for optimum ground effect.

MARCH RACING

March-Ford 811/02 :
Derek Daly (IRL)
March-Ford 911/03 :
Eliseo Salazar (RCH)

Since South Africa a number of modifications had been carried out on the Marchs including new rear suspension But they still hadn't done much testing and were principally held up for exactly that reason, although Daly had an engine break on Friday. On the Saturday he had steering trouble, particularly with a lot of downforce. Neither driver qualified, and the team set off for Paul Newman's workshops at Laguna Seca for three days testing.

TALBOT

IN THE COCKPIT

TALBOT

JACQUES LAFFITE

But for your accident with Eddie Cheever, the Tyrrell Driver, you might have got a place in the top six at Long Beach. Who was responsible for this accident, Eddie Cheever or Jacques Laffite ?

The nature of the circuit here makes passing difficult. Naturally one cannot ask the organisers to redesign their street layout and motorways for three days of the year, they have to fit the circuit into the existing surroundings. However, at this particular circuit, one can only overtake if another driver really allows you to.

But there were quite a number of overtaking manœuvres which were problemfree. Mario Andretti passed Cheever without any trouble.

Yes, but that was after y'd hit Cheever. He had to be careful. Two crashes within a few laps wouldn't have pleased Ken Tyrrel in the slightest.

Are you therefore blaming Cheever for your accident ?

No, not at all. It's simply that if he'd had two accidents within a couple of laps, it would have looked as though it was his fault.
It's one of those things. I had a friend who had two road accidents on the same day. The first was his fault. The second was when he was stationary at traffic lights and someone ran into the back of him. It obviously wasn't his fault, yet having already had one accident in the day, it just seemed as though it must be his fault again. So Cheever couldn't afford another one, he had to allow Mario to overtake. You ask him.

The truth is never statistical, except maybe for insurance companies. But tell us, whose fault was it ?

Mine.

So you admit it, an honest Grand Prix driver. Is 1981 going to be sincerity year ?

No, this a particular case. None of us should ever really admit things. We're at war with one another, and providing we don't actually come to blows, virtually anything is allowed. We have to fight one another on the track, over contracts, money and our freedom. That's the same for anyone. We are all fighting to be individuals in an age where we're being pushed into conformity. We all take a little artistic licence, although there are some occasions where honesty is really the only possible course. And on those occasions, we like to be quoted as being honest.

So if a journalist writes an article which is hard on a driver, does that driver want to reprimand the journalist ?

Yes, but another driver might also agree. For example, if I read that « stupid Cheever had yet another accident and robbed Laffite of a place on the rostrum, » I'd feel that it was only fair to reprimand the journalist.
However, I wouldn't feel quite so strongly about it as Cheever. He would probably thump the journalist.
But going on to the accident itself, the car was understeering a lot for reasons that were still unclear to the Talbot Ligier team. Now understeer is when the car continues in the direction of travel instead of turning and following the direction given by the front wheels.
I was accelerating out of the corner with care which allowed Cheever to pull slightly ahead of me. But I should have been able to cut that gap before breaking for the next corner by accelerating through the gears.
But I didn't manage it. However, I could feel that Mario Andretti wasn't far behind, and I realised that I had to try and overtake Cheever.
I realise now that I wasn't really close enough to him to try and overtake him, and he had time to shut the door. We both knew that he had the advantage. We may have been slower per lap than I was but he knew where his advantage lay. I had to take a risk to get by him.

Wouldn't it have been better to stay behind him and settle for fifth place and hope that he'd make a mistake ?

No, because racing is overtaking all the people in front of one and trying to drive as fast as possible. If I'd settled for fifth place at Long Beach, I might be content with second row of the grid at Argentina, and the back row at Monaco. There's only one way to race and that is to be competitive. Being competitive is wanting to finish at the front, and nothing else is good enough. Most of us in Formula One have won races, and we know what it's like. First place is the only place, in our heads we never settle for less.

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TALBOT

IN THE COCKPIT
TALBOT

JEAN-PIERRE JARIER

It was, or rather it should have been a tremendous opportunity. The start of the Grand Prix season had snunk up on me and I still didn't have a drive. My hopes of landing a Lotus drive had come to nothing. It was only because Jean-Pierre Jabouille was still not in peak physical condition that I came to take the plane to Long Beach. He had to pull out of the race, and fortunately the Talbot-Ligier people thought of me to take his place on this occasion.

The Ligier team have really put some fine performances together over the past couple of years. Furthermore, the arrival of Talbot as principal sponsors has allowed the team increase its potential. The twelve cylinder Matra engine now used in the car gives excellent torque which is just what is needed around the streets of Long Beach. And testing of the Talbot-Ligier at Circuit Paul-Ricard and Nogaro had shown promise as well. Basically, everything seemed to point to the fact that this time I was to drive a really competitive car. Naturally, I was pretty happy about that fact. I didn't know what the rest of year held in store, but a decent result at Long Beach would certainly help should there be any more drives in the offing later in the year.

The team that I joined at Long Beach was one with whom I'd worked in the past. I drove for the Ligier team at the Japanese Grand Prix in 1977, but I also had a tremendous season in the World Championship of Makes driving for the Matra team in 1974. Jean-Pierre Beltoise and I won fives races.

I was a bit nervous before the start of practice because I hadn't driven a single-seater for six months, but after that first practice I felt much better. My neck was a little painful because I hadn't done that much training, but I was very encouraged by my second fastest time behind Alan Jones.

But the next day my hopes began to fade. I dropped from second to tenth on the grid. Neither Jacques nor I improved the car's set-up from the previous day and that proved to be a mistake. I went a bit quicker but that was because the track was quicker. Everyone else improved considerably and pushed me down the grid.

The next day, during the warm-up, I still didn't manage to set the car up properly, and I was still uncompetitive. The car understeered, lacked traction and was slow in a straight line. Long Beach is a unique circuit, one where you have to set the car up very carefully. You have to have enough downforce at the front to ensure good turn-in, but at the same time the rear end has to be soft in order to gain the best traction. But the Talbot-Ligier didn't react to this set-up. I'm not saying the car couldn't go well at Long Beach, I'm just making the point that the car couldn't be set-up properly, because the team didn't bring the right springs and anti-roll bars with them. Neither Jacques nor I managed to get the car competitive.

Of course I hadn't driven a Talbot Ligier JS 17 before that friday morning, so I could scarcely hope to get the best from the car.

But the race was still to come and one could but hope. The Long Beach event is traditionally one where finishers are scarce. The circuit is like a long funnel, and from the first lap there are retirements. I didn't manage to get past the first corner last year. One just has to hope that another driver doesn't hit one's car, or get too ambitious going into that first corner. The most important thing is not to do anything stupid, and hope that everyone nearby is equally sensible.

The start was alright but I still hit another car during the first lap and slightly bent a steering arm. By the tenth lap I was in more trouble. I had a small electrical problem, perhaps a plug lead broke, and had lost 500 revs. During practice I hade superb torque. Because of electrics, I had none during the race. Finally the fuel pump broke and my race was over.

Naturally I was a bit upset the evening after the race, but I haven't lost hope. I'd like to think that I shall be driving a Grand Prix car again soon. One mustn't lose hope in life. I hope to find a decent drive one day but for the moment I have absolutely nothing. I'm totally free.

BRAZIL

WILL BE ON SALE ON APRIL 8

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